



NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

# Don't Trust the Big Man

by

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Advanced Research Project

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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6 June 2008

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE 6 June 2008		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE  DON'T TRUST THE BIG MAN		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER			
		5b. GRANT NUMBER			
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER			
6. AUTHOR(S)  Stanton S. Coerr    Lieutenant Colonel U.S. Marines		5d. PROJECT NUMBER			
		5e. TASK NUMBER			
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER			
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)			
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)			
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES    A paper submitted to the faculty of the NWC in full satisfaction of the requirements of an Advanced Research Project. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.					
14. ABSTRACT The African region below the Sahel, with its legacy of racist European colonial rule followed in the early 1960s by the emergence of incompetent, kleptocratic and ruthless African rule, is dominated by weak or failed states. Such states breed insurgencies. Three case studies provide insight into insurgent movements and the incompetent governments under which they thrive. Two short analyses are counterpoints: the success of Botswana, and the failure of Sudan. A full-length analysis of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its full-scale insurgencies since 1960 –at the hands of Big Man leaders Lumumba, Mobutu, and Kabila - provide object lessons as to the underlying conditions, catalysts, and igniters of insurgencies. These case studies point to two keys to predicting insurgencies within failed states: 1) <i>With a background of a failed state as a matrix, successful insurgencies are sparked, led, and culminated by one <u>Big Man leader</u>, and 2) This Big Man succeeds when he <u>finds, exploits or creates a seam</u> between states, nations, tribes or clans.</i> The African Big Man leader takes the traditional place of the African tribal chief. It is this aggressive, dynamic leader, working at that seam, who can unite warring tribes, clans or groups into a coherent insurgent whole. It is this man through whom a growing insurgent movement succeeds or fails.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Insurgency, Failed States, Africa, Botswana, Congo, Zaire, Sudan, Rwanda, Big Man Leader, Mobutu, Kabila, Lumumba, Dallaire, Mogae, Masire, Bashir, Khama					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  101	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON LTCOL Stan Coerr USMC
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 619-787-7649

In certain areas of the world, the existence of states is a pretense for want of anything that the international system would recognize and accept. Full Westphalian sovereignty should never have been accorded to fragile postcolonial entities with no history and experience of performing as a state.

As (African) ex-colonial territories became, *faut de mieux*, nation-states, so in many cases their weak social bases were compensated for by neopatrimonialism and a hierarchy of antidemocratic decisions that ultimately led to failure and collapse.

Bad governance is an inescapable corollary, and it has often preceded insurgencies within states.

Robert Rotberg, *When States Fail*<sup>1</sup>

The African states below the Sahel - with their legacy of racist European colonial rule followed, in the early 1960s, by the emergence of incompetent, kleptocratic and ruthless African rule - are dominated by weak or failed states. Such states breed insurgencies. Three case studies provide insight into insurgent movements and the incompetent governments under which they thrive. Two short analyses are counterpoints: the success of Botswana, and the failure of Sudan. A full-length analysis of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its full-scale insurgencies since 1960 – at the hands of Big Man leaders Lumumba, Mobutu, and Kabila - provide object lessons as to the underlying conditions, catalysts, and igniters of insurgencies. These case studies point to two keys to predicting insurgencies within failed states:

- 1) *With a background of a failed state as a matrix, successful insurgencies are sparked, led, and culminated by one Big Man leader, and*
- 2) *This Big Man succeeds when he finds, exploits or creates a seam between states, nations, tribes or clans.*

The African Big Man leader takes the traditional place of the African tribal chief. It is this aggressive, dynamic leader, working at that seam, who can unite warring tribes, clans or groups into a coherent insurgent whole. It is this man through whom a growing insurgent movement succeeds or fails. Once he gains power, though, too often

the sum of Africa's misfortunes – its wars, its despotisms, its corruption, its droughts, its everyday violence – presents a crisis of such magnitude that it goes beyond the reach of foreseeable solutions. At the core of the crisis is the failure of African leaders to provide effective government. Africa has suffered grievously at the hands of its Big Men and its ruling elites.

Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*<sup>2</sup>

## The State

Failed states have made a remarkable odyssey from the periphery to the very center of global politics. During the Cold War, state failure was seen through the prism of superpower conflict and was rarely addressed as a danger in its own right. Now, it seems, everybody cares.

*Foreign Policy*, Failed States Index, August 2005.<sup>3</sup>

A state is a governing entity with defined borders, within which it has a monopoly on lethal force, across and beyond which it controls “interactions between that territory and the world around it.”<sup>4</sup> The state provides to its citizens political goods: infrastructure and its maintenance; law and order within its borders; bodies of executive and deliberative rulemaking, and of judicial redress of grievance; and representation of the people’s interests on the world stage. Of the structural basics of government, none is as important as human security.<sup>5</sup>

The idea of the state is a European creation, rooted in the Treaty of Westphalia and, more importantly, in the ideas Europeans had of borders and maps. Depending on the scholar questioned, these entities began as either natural alliances of people already united by colocation, culture, ethnicity, religion and language; or they came from the idea that rule could be imposed on an area by an organized power, whether internal or imposed from without.<sup>6</sup> It is a small step from the first idea to the second when considering the export of colonial rule by the Great Powers of Europe into sub-Saharan Africa.

The uniquely intractable problems of those states below the Sahel derive directly from a history of subservience to white rule, and a modern history of subservience to incompetent African rule. Indeed, “over large areas of Africa, the idea of a ‘state’ derives

only from the imposition of colonial rule.”<sup>7</sup> The incompetence of many African governments, and their propensity to failure, is framed by underlying conditions and traditions, but driven by modern African hands.

### **States: Strong to Weak**

Weak and failing states represent a new class of conflict, not isolated events.

*Foreign Policy*, August 2007 <sup>8</sup>

States fall into one of several categories, based upon overall government competence (see attached Insurgency/Government Capability chart.) *Strong* states are thriving, safe, economically vibrant and open, free for dissent, and openly democratic in outlook and polity participation in governing, and able to deliver the governing basics to the people inside borders it controls. They provide citizens the basics of human security. This is how the Westerner thinks of the State: the United Kingdom, or the United States, or Germany or Norway. States lacking in one or several of these categories, with human security as by far the most important, are considered weakening, but not yet failed. These states draw attention to themselves, and alert observers begin to fret about the fate of these entities, but are not yet glowing with distress: Angola, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Cambodia are modern examples.

Next down the list of competence are *weak states*: the types of states, like Laos, Indonesia, or Syria, which are unable to truly govern all people or territory within their borders, and may be dealing with budding insurgencies, but are not yet in crisis.

## **States: Failing and Failed**

Then come *failing states* - Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Rwanda, for example - those which have lost control of at least part of the territory of their countries, are experiencing internal violence from one or more insurgent movements, and are sliding down the scale of economic strength and approaching the abyss.

Farther down the scale of incompetence, corruption and neglect are those states which are considered to have failed. A *failed state* is one which

has lost control of its territory or of the monopoly of the legitimate use of force. Some regimes lack the authority to make collective decisions or the capacity to deliver public services. In other countries, the populace may rely entirely on the black market, fail to pay taxes, or engage in large-scale disobedience. (These states) must endure poverty, corruption, and natural disasters.<sup>9</sup>

Both the World Bank and *Foreign Policy* journal have tried to quantify what is essentially an objective evaluation of state failure, and have established numerical criteria for it. Both organizations split governing competence into economic, political, social and institutional factors, and it is significant that of these four criteria, three (excepting underlying social factors) are directly in the control of a ruling regime and, more to the point, of a leader.

Beginning in 2005, the Fund for Peace and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace have combined to publish, in the Carnegie Endowment's journal *Foreign Policy*, a Failed States Index. This index is based on a weighted analysis (termed a Conflict Assessment System Tool, or CAST) of twelve indicators (*not causes*) of failure. These indicators are grouped into the categories of social, political and economic (for a listing of these indicators, see Appendix A.)

The World Bank takes a subtly different view of state failure. In an effort to define and quantify “governance,” the organization developed a score it calls CPIA: Country Policy and Institutional Assessment. A country’s CPIA score was once a secret number, used as an internal criterion by World Bank officials determining how much money to give individual states based upon both how badly that country needed help, and whether the aid would be properly spent. Under pressure, the World Bank began releasing individual scores (rather than quintile groupings) in June 2006.

These 16 criteria are grouped into four clusters: Economic Management, Structural Policies, Policies for Social Inclusion/Equity, and Public Sector Management and Institutions (for a complete listing of these criteria, see Appendix B.) Though the methodology for determining each score is still secret – and thus, to some, suspect<sup>10</sup> – the CPIA score stands as the standard for measuring government effectiveness, even used by the White House as reference for aid decisions.<sup>11</sup>

With these two sets of criteria as background, a list of underlying conditions - precursors to state failure - might include economic, political and social factors. Institutional factors fall beneath, or act as causes of, these other three (see sets of factors in more detail in Appendices C (economic), D (political) and E (social).)

### **States: The End of the Line**

Last, and rare, is the *collapsed state*, which is a state in name only but does not exist as a coherent governing entity by any measure. It does not participate in the diplomatic universe of coherent nations, does not have a head of state, and does not control the people who live within its borders. These are those “hollowed out” anarchic



entities, as both Meredith and Rotberg describe them: carcasses left to rot. Somalia is such a state, and Sudan's existential crisis in Darfur puts it in that category as well.

The very last, and most unnerving, of state failure categories is what William Reno calls the "post-state society."<sup>12</sup> This is not anarchy but dystopia, a state which has been systematically destroyed, on purpose, to perpetuate a level of chronic confusion which maximizes power, treasure and security for a ruling elite clustered around a Big Man<sup>13</sup> ruler. The modern Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa) is such a state.

In these failed, or collapsed, states, which unfortunately "represent the future for much of the world," the state has often simply disappeared.<sup>14</sup> Into the vacuum of the absence of governing authority will arise those seeking power, money, fame, or control. Since these states are "primary centers of disorder," and "insurgent networks thrive on disorder," it is logical to look at failed states as the breeding grounds for a revolutionary coalition...an insurgency.<sup>15</sup>

## **Insurgency**

*Sound trumpets! let our bloody colors wave*

*And either victory, or else a grave*

Insurgency, at its core, is a military movement in pursuit of a political goal. In a 2007 study, Frank Hoffman states that an insurgency is "(a) violent competition between a state and a rival political group to control a population or establish an alternative political order."<sup>16</sup> David Kilcullen points up the violent aspects of such movements, insisting that insurgency is "a popular movement that seeks to overthrow the status quo through subversion, political activity, insurrection, armed conflict and terror."<sup>17</sup>

The Central Intelligence Agency says that “insurgency is a protracted political-military activity directed toward completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations,” and their definition adds a key point about insurgent groups: “their desire to control a particular area (which) differentiates them from purely terrorist organizations, whose objectives do not include the creation of an alternative government...”<sup>18</sup>

### **Styles of Insurgency**

*Seems he a dove? his feathers are but borrowed.*

*Is he a lamb? His skin is surely lent him.*

*For he's inclined as is the ravenous wolf.*

In the 1950s and 1960s (which Hoffman calls the “glorious heyday of revolutionary warfare”<sup>19</sup>), insurgencies were viewed through the lens of a classical school of inherently rational, study of Maoist revolution, using lessons from Latin American and Asian wars and extrapolating them across world insurgent movements. Though now viewed as proud, romantic idealists, movement leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, and David Ben-Gurion were insurgents of their day, classified as principled moralists having expressed legitimate grievances against an oppressive government using armed insurrection as a means to a political end. Western writers, imbued with the romance of the noble fighter for a cause, often cannot keep the dissonance from their observations of such men, slipping into a tone of admiration for

such romantic, “steely freedom fighters” as Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe,<sup>20</sup> while coldly outlining those men’s murderous predations in running countries to ground.

The classic insurgent, carrying a banner of deeper grievance for his people, using violence (and often terror) as means to a political end, demands a military response. Here would fit the North Vietnamese, the Algerian, Cypriot and Filipino movements - insurgencies leading to war. This is the original, classical insurgency as Bernard Fall, Frank Hoffman, David Galula, and David Kilcullen see it: an angry group of dispossessed people struggling within state borders. Such fighters arm themselves against 1) the state itself, 2) one another for the spoils of a failed state, or 3) a foreign invader, against whom they must unite.

French academic Bernard Fall remains perhaps the most nuanced and intuitive observer of insurgent movements, devoting his life to study of such movements in Indochina until his death on Vietnam’s “Street Without Joy” in February 1967. Fall observed that insurgency is at its core a revolutionary movement, fought in support of a unifying doctrine, using guerrilla tactics combined with political action.<sup>21</sup> In analyzing government (whether in power; or in waiting, or de facto), Fall was focused on one word: legitimacy.

He was convinced that the control of a country revolved around the ability of a force – whether a standing government, a government in waiting, or a shadowy insurgent force - to tax its citizens.<sup>22</sup> Collecting tax indicates strength and the peasant legitimacy of a governing force; the loss of such ability, whether rapid or subtly slow, indicates a lack of control. Without such ability, the government is not viewed as legitimate, and

“without being widely accepted as legitimate, the government is unlikely to survive a determined insurgency.”<sup>23</sup>

In the late 1960s and into the 1970s, another style of insurgency arose. This was the dawn of the modern terrorists, viewed as misfits and aberrations, insurgents gone purely criminal, using death for its shock value and political impact. Their use of targeted murder demanded a law enforcement, not military, answer. European terror groups, such as the Irish Republican Army, Red Army Faction and Black September, used pure terror as political statements. Murderers absent an undergirding moral authority for their acts, these groups, and their imitators, shrunk insurgency from an existential government-wide problem down to one to be handled by elements *within* the government.

Farther down the scale of thuggery, violence and murder and on the other end of the scale of government control, is that of the insurgent who actually wins control of the country, risen to power and turned psychopathic monster: a Pol Pot, Idi Amin or Saddam Hussein. Against such men the outrage of the world community, absent a military response, is ineffective, and these rulers are free to murder and rape within their borders. Until they moved across a line on a map (Saddam) or began to influence the governments around theirs (Pol Pot), the world ignored them. The greater community viewed their depredations with horror, but with the Cold War at the top of the list of fears, did little to stop them.

Modern insurgency, the global Islamic jihad which came to the fore in the 1990s, marks a third style of insurgency, joining the Maoist and Marxist Latin and Asian insurgencies and the European terror movements. This jihad is fundamentally different

from a classical insurgent movement, and its expression is unique to its religious baseline. Hoffman points out that the modern, American view of insurgency depends on two fundamentals: the view that insurgency is an inherently secular struggle, and that Western-trained minds assume an insurgency will be inherently rational in its expression within a state's borders and in its concomitant desire to control that state.

The Naval War College's John Waghelstein insists that popular support is the key to any insurgency,<sup>24</sup> echoing the classical insurgency experts from the Asian and Latin American jungles:

The primary objective of counterinsurgency warfare is not merely the guerrilla's elimination, neutralization, and conversion, but the winning-over of the apathetic majority of the people. Because the guerrilla cannot live without the civilians' support...winning them politically is a most important immediate objective. Whenever you have gained control and won the support of the population...the guerrilla cannot easily come back. People will revert to their normal political indifference...<sup>25</sup>

The globalized insurgency centers on nonstate, religious actors on a transnational scale, and even Hoffman admits that in such a modern insurgent movement "the people may not be the prize."<sup>26</sup> This insurgent doesn't need, and therefore doesn't care about, the locals: he can get his support globally. To that end, for this new breed of insurgent, the local populace may be expendable. The jihadis use terror to make a nihilist point, but they do not themselves want to control territory, or govern.

The global jihad, then, is a hybrid insurgency blending the raw terror of IRA-style insurgents with the political ends of the Latin American and Asian movements: terror used as a tool, but with the political goal of upsetting a larger political order without an underlying desire to rule. In this new brand of insurgency are new ideas which Western observers, stepping out at last from behind the 1960's theorists' long shadow,<sup>27</sup> are just

beginning to study and quantify. Such movements have a “mosaic”<sup>28</sup> of players across multiple nationalities, and ethnic and tribal allegiances, all united by call to jihad against a common enemy. Kilcullen insists that there is an 85% correlation between the larger Islamist insurgency and al-Qaeda terror,<sup>29</sup> and views this style of insurgency as a global clearinghouse – not a command structure - for the export of violence.

Modern actors use information and communications warfare to far greater effect than did revolutionaries even ten years ago, act across a poorly-defined, or ambiguous, battlespace, and can be nearly impossible to define (and thus impossible to defeat.) Most important, this new stateless insurgency may also be leaderless, operating on a cellular structure and without a conventional center of gravity, depriving hierarchical Western-style armies the bilateral competition for which they have been trained.

### **Conditions for Insurgency**

Sheer bad governance has been at the root of many of Africa’s insurgencies.  
Christopher Clapham<sup>30</sup>

*Indicators* of insurgency show the observer (in particular, the Western observer) that what he is seeing is in fact a significant classic insurgency. This is to be differentiated from the normal day-to-day conflict which is so shocking to Americans but so normal to those in the third and fourth worlds. This is also to be differentiated from the global insurgency, which has different goals and methods. Examples of such classic insurgency factors might be:

- Movement interest in taking and holding physical territory
- Movement desire to rule, not simply destroy
- Movement immunity to loss of members
- Movement immunity to deterrence or palliance

- Identifiable leader: the Big Man.

The insurgency itself begins, observer David Carment says, with three sets of factors. These are *structural* factors: the background conditions of dysfunction; *accelerators*, in which anger ripens into systemic breakdown; and *triggers*, the sudden events by which accelerants tip into violence.<sup>31</sup> Structural factors and accelerators are so common in African failed states as to fade into background noise; so many of these states are in such chaos, these factors will be common across many or all of them. The structural and accelerating factors might include, among other factors:

- Seam – between states or groups- which the Big Man can exploit
- Gradual scaling back of government institutions<sup>32</sup>
- Relative deprivation, in which expectations of a populace do not match its capability to achieve those expectations
- Unresponsive ruling class
- Poor population contiguous to growing or explosive wealth, with no buffering middle class
- Unsatisfactory status quo
- Targeted, resolvable, unresolved lower class grievance
- Convincing narrative of anger and explication of grievance
- Agile, mobilized action class united by tribe, clan, race or religion

Of more interest, and more predictive of significant insurgency, are the triggers to such movements, and the Big Man leaders who carry them out. Such triggers might include

- Catalyzing, unifying Big Man leader
- Use of violence to resolve disputes<sup>33</sup>
- Unifying cause suddenly apparent
- Relative deprivation spikes, or becomes more obvious
- Sudden discovery of resources: oil or diamonds as example
- Crescendo of ruling elite's violation of three sets of values:
  - Welfare
  - Interpersonal
  - Power

Life in central Africa provides object lessons in the beginnings of insurgency. The living conditions for most Africans below the Sahel, the incompetence of their governments, the relative deprivation they see between their lot in life and that of their rulers, and the anger which is ready to be channeled into aggression all combine to make a matrix for such movements to grow.

The variable in this list is the Big Man ruler: these structural, accelerating and triggering factors may be present, but without someone to exploit them. In such a situation, an insurgency may fester for decades (as evidenced by the low-level, chronic insurgencies in India), but will not become truly significant without the spark of the Big Man. This ruler, along with his top lieutenants, comes closest to what a Western observer might target as the military weak point of a fundamentally political movement:

(t)he nature of center of gravity in an insurgency differs significantly from that in a high-intensity conventional war, because the content of the strategic objective is predominantly non-military...rarely do the insurgents mass enough forces to constitute a tangible operational center of gravity. For the government, the rebel's top leadership...might comprise a strategic center of gravity. The individual rebel commanders and their forces in the countryside would constitute usually tactical and, in some exceptional cases, operational centers of gravity.<sup>34</sup>

The last, ugliest and critical piece of the insurgency puzzle is that of the tools used to carry it out. As Moises Naim points out, "only three percent of the 550 million small arms and light weapons, worldwide, are in the hands of government, military or police."<sup>35</sup> Africa, amongst its other problems, suffers from an abundance of the instruments of insurgency:

In that decade of the 1990s, I was three times in Somalia. It seemed like the world was just coming apart. It was remarkable that in the bi-polar world, the Soviets and we had managed to keep a lid on all this. So once that lid was lifted, and the places that had been controlled by the pressures and investments from the West and East to make sure things didn't explode were released from that control,



all the ethnic hatreds, past rivalries, and the effects of poverty flared up. All (Africa) had to show for its association with the West or the Soviet bloc was this collection of weapons.

Anthony C. Zinni  
General, U.S. Marine Corps Retired.<sup>36</sup>

### **Triggers**

*Many strokes, though with a little axe,  
Hew down and fell the hardest-timber'd oak.*

Africa was a land of almost breathtaking beauty or of savage poverty; a land of screaming ghosts or of sun-flung possibilities; a land of inviting warmth or of desperate drought. Places have their own peculiar smells, and here the smell was the sun on hot rocks, wood smoke and the tinny smell of fresh sweat. It is not a romantic smell. It is not the smell of a free people, living as they would choose. It is the smell of people who have been marginalized and disempowered and forgotten. It is the smell of people without a voice in a world where only the loud are fed.<sup>37</sup>

Social scientist Ted Robert Gurr is intrigued with the lower end of warfare, the drivers within the human psyche that build and motivate men to take up arms against their – real or perceived -oppressors. He observes that there are three types of political warfare – turmoil, conspiracy, and internal war - all based on an underclass's perception of their *level of deprivation relative to* that which they see around them (see attached Intensity of Value Drive Being Frustrated/Intensity of Response chart.) Gurr, sharpening Maslow, categorizes human drives into three sets of values:

- *Welfare values*: physical needs of food, shelter and health
- *Power values*: influence on others, including social participation and security
- *Interpersonal values*: psychological satisfaction, including status, community, and an ideological coherence in social surroundings.<sup>38</sup>

Poverty is, of course, a *contributor* to discontent, but the basic lack of physical goods or the means to attain them is a *cause* only if such deprivation can be blamed on someone else. Deprivation becomes relative deprivation if that poverty is viewed as being somehow unjust, irremediable, or the fault of an identifiable other. It does matter if that poverty is *in fact* the fault of that other...it matters if the people *believe* it to be so. Such a relative deprivation is not inherently political, but in the hands of a skilled, vocal leader it can become politicized.<sup>39</sup> Relative deprivation is the linchpin, the critical piece of the insurgency puzzle, because it explains why the otherwise-uninvolved, dispassionate bystander can begin insurrection. This is one of the seams the Big Man can exploit.

It is crucial for the observer to understand Gurr's salient point: deprivation is not equivalent to poverty, and poverty in and of itself is not a true cause of uprising. For example, the abject, grinding hand-to-mouth poverty of the slums of Calcutta, Cite de Soleil, or Rio de Janeiro have yielded no significant insurgent movements, while the moderately affluent in Kenya, Chad, Ukraine, Nepal, Tibet and Palestine have, in the past decade, begun violent revolutions. A black underclass lived for generations beneath a brutal, racist minority regime in shantytown South Africa without truly dedicated resistance, while the black underclass living in the comparative luxury and freedom of 1967 Detroit, Washington, D.C. and Watts exploded into murderous violence.

Anger can be directed at an incompetent governing organization which is unable to deliver on the basic promises it makes to its people and thus becomes what Gurr calls the "agency of final disappointment."<sup>40</sup> Rotberg places at the center of government responsibility the delivery and enforcement of the most basic political good - human

security<sup>41</sup> - and in the absence of such security other goods rise to the surface. The narrower the range of opportunities, the more cogent the framing argument to channel frustration, the more powerful becomes the sufferer's impetus to a collective violence. The targeting and channeling of this violence (see attached Deprivation-Violence Curve) begins the insurgent movement.

All of these conditions, factors, accelerators and tools of insurgency build as scene-setters for *the single most important indicator of when state failure will tip into insurgency*: the rise of the single, catalyzing autocrat, the Big Man leader. This man can operate smoothly, even thrive, in a milieu of anarchy; take advantage of, or even create, the accelerators to insurgency; and take advantage of, or provide, the trigger when people are poised for homicide.

### **The Big Man Catalyst**

*Why shall we fight, if you pretend no title?*

The catalyzing Big Man leader can create a resonant narrative of anger which explains a polity's cognitive dissonance between expectation and result, thus becoming the spokesman for a cause which he created, or for the injustice he has pointed out. He convinces the people that he is one of them, that he too is suffering, but that he (and only he) has a way out. He is both things at once- the common man, and the leader.

This Big Man is crucial because he is the one who can do two things. First, he can *find a seam* to exploit: between nations; between states; between tribes; between clans and groups of people; or, most significantly, between the people and their rulers.

Second, he can *unite groups* behind him, often with a nationalist rhetoric, usually with a narrative of anger to provide a channel for the pent-up anger at a failing government. This is where the tribal culture becomes interesting. The Big Man can find the seam between tribes, on the one hand, and pull them apart to his liking. He can unite tribal units, on the other hand, creating coalitions to rule. The Big Man pulls in squabbling or even warring groups, channels their anger, and with himself at the head of the movement presents a significant threat.

In such a way, dissonance becomes anomie, which in turn manifests as violence. Discontent among a populace builds, as frustration grows into anger, then explodes into aggression. Such discontent develops, yielding turmoil; then politicizes, and yields conspiracy, and in the end actualizes into internal war.<sup>42</sup>

Members of the crowd are always promising one another a splendid future triumph of some sort. This promise of victory (is) nearly always to be enjoyed at the expense, discomfiture and humiliation of somebody else. The crowd always makes a hero of the public person. He is transformed into a symbol of what the crowd wishes to believe him to be. The Big Man now appears great because he possesses the qualities of the little man. He is representative man, crowd man. The self-feeling of a crowd is always enhanced by the triumph of its leader...and this is what a revolution is-the dictatorship of a new crowd.<sup>43</sup>

Rotberg points out that internal dissent ratchets upwards as discontent rises. These variables begin with turmoil: a riot or demonstration in the street; progress to the politicized conspiracy: plots, armed forces' mutiny, and coup planning and attempts; coalesces into revolution; then finally graduates to internal civil or guerrilla war.<sup>44</sup>

All the structural factors – infant mortality, inflation rates, per capita GDP, HIV/AIDS, foreign aid as crutch for weakening state, and so on - are important and ominous, but primarily to the observer. They are the drumbeat of life in the failed states.

They are, besides, transparent to the common man. He does not care about infant mortality- he cares about *his* child. He does not care about GDP- he cares about *his* money. He does not care about these things *until someone tells him he should*.

Some insurgencies grow in states which are in relative stasis or improving, some in states which are spiraling down. Some rise from an educated, frustrated elite; some come when an impoverished underclass sees no way out. No matter the welfare values being frustrated or the drivers for the discontent itself, these movements do not rise without a catalyzing leader to put voice, or narrative, to discontent.

The power of the Big Man – whether Osama bin Laden in the global jihad, or the African insurgent leader launching a traditional insurgency as precursor to ruling a state - is in his creating a narrative which describes internal anguish and feelings of disconnect and deprivation. He gives people a direction in which to point their anger, and perpetuates, or creates, feelings of deprivation and unfairness. In short, the Big Man insurgent leader creates, and widens, a seam.

*Foreign Policy* notes the centrality of this leader can go two ways. Insurgencies can grow into coups which, having succeeded, then devolve into extractive dictatorships, but it is also true that “effective leadership can pull a state back from the brink”<sup>45</sup> and stop the chaos that fuels an insurgent movement. Too often, these insurgencies become self-sustaining events, with the leader’s narrative of anger continuing long past the rebellion itself, and the invention of grievances to keep an autocrat on the throne as he further arrogates power and treasure.

In the classical insurgency, those from which post-colonial Africa tends to suffer, such narratives come from violent, power-hungry rebels, looking to control the state, not

the world. It is the rare African Big Man - leaders of the Mogae/Mandela stripe - who takes power and then shares it, or gives back to the people. Too common is the grasping, violent Big Man, and his insurgency is often not just the product of state failure but its cause:

While failing states like Iraq and Somalia may suffer from poor governance, they are kept company by a number of countries ruled by long-serving strongmen. History is full of brutal leaders who have plunged their lands into poverty and war through greed, corruption and violence. And though many events can lead to state failure, few are as decisive or as deadly as bad leadership.<sup>46</sup>

## **Africa**

*'Tis my presence that doth trouble ye.*

*I see thy fury; if I longer stay*

*We shall begin our ancient bickerings.*

In 1955, Africa had four independent states: Egypt, Liberia, Ethiopia, and the Union of South Africa. The rest of the continent was vast swaths of nations with names like Rhodesia, Rio de Oro, Tanganyika and Nyasaland, now lost to history, controlled, to varying extents, by the French (which alone had 17 colonies,) and British (14), Belgian, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese rulers. Fifty years later, the continent would have 58 states...all self-governing.<sup>47</sup>

When the continent shrugged off European rule, beginning in 1956 with the independence of Sudan and accelerating in the summer of 1960, the fundamental weakness of the fundamental idea of the African state was exposed, and the subcontinent began down the “classic patrimonial route to state collapse.”<sup>48</sup> That patrimony began with white rule, but came into its full, ugly maturity with the patrimony of African rulers of other Africans. Indeed, “blacks found that independence had brought them little of the freedom and power they had been promised.”<sup>49</sup>

### **Clan and Tribe**

*Think'st thou that I will leave my kingly throne,*

*Wherein my grandsire and my father sat?*

*No: first war shall unpeople this my realm.*

The most obvious nuance of Africa, of course, is its ethnically black, Negroid population, immediately assumed inferior, or even subhuman, by Caucasoid European rulers who viscerally disliked and patronized – or enslaved - people with black skin. On Congo's independence day in June 1960, Patrice Lumumba put it directly to the Belgian king, before an African crowd:

We have known sarcasm and insults, endured blows morning, noon and night because we were niggers. We have seen that the law was quite different for a white than for a black: accommodating for the former, cruel and inhuman for the latter.<sup>50</sup>

African peoples, particularly in those 47 new countries below the Sahel<sup>51</sup>, were, and are, united not by border or government, but by tribe, clan, and subclan. If rapped hard, they would not naturally cleave into states, but into *nations*, to which they had and have primary allegiance. Those nations were ruled by chiefs, to whom a group had primary allegiance, and who in return provided security and political goods for their tribes.

The romantic ideal of the proud African nation – the nomadic Zulu, Dinka, and Maasai; the Shona and Yoruba and Somali - militates against the very idea of borders drawn through tribal and nomadic areas by the hand of white men from across the sea. Such ignorance of interpersonal values – the dismissal of the tribe, the core of who Africans are – is why the European powers created their own insurgencies within these colonies.

Creating states from tribal nations did not succeed in Africa, because the centrality of the chief was dismissed. Without such a chief, tribal nations continued to depend on one another, but without guidance of their traditional leaders, and therefore



without the coherence that a state assumes. Political parties, and political movements, filled the gap: at the beginnings of the independence movement in Congo, for example, “almost every party sprang from tribal origins.”<sup>52</sup>

Walter Clarke and Robert Gosende, using the disaster that is modern Somalia as case in point, draw the larger conclusion:

How could a state with a strong cohesive cultural history, a common language and religion, and a shared history of nationalism have collapsed so completely? There are five major clan families in Somalia...each clan family is divided into six or more major clans, which are themselves separated into subclans, lineages, and extended families. According to one Somali scholar, ‘Ethnicity or tribalism...represents primordial cleavages and cultural fragmentation within Somali society. Clanism lies at the root of the country’s collapse. *One might legitimately ask if the Somali nation ever constituted a state* (emphasis added.)’<sup>53</sup>

These tribal baselines for society, so foreign to the Europeans in their set, hard-shelled states, guaranteed eventual European colonial failure. Theodore Roosevelt was an astute and emotional author and observer of this phenomenon. Roosevelt, himself a member of the “first circle of aristocracy,”<sup>54</sup> saw parallels between what the European conquerors were doing to brown-skinned peoples around the world and what American conquerors – those of his social class - were doing to the red-skinned people in the American West. He was a true believer in the rightness of the white man’s burden, the noble cause of bringing truth and light to the dark man, the “obligation of strong, dependable, worthy Christian powers to rule the less reliable, less worthy non-white world.”<sup>55</sup> He believed and hoped, with remarkable prescience, that such a master-slave relationship in Africa could not long endure, as he wrote with remarkable insight in 1894:

Men of our stock do not prosper in tropical countries. Only in thinly peopled, temperate regions is there any lasting hope for European civilization (he wrote.) Europeans hoping to live and propagate permanently in the hot regions of...Africa are doomed. In Africa south of the Zambesi there may remain white

States, although even these States will surely contain a large colored population, always threatening to swamp the whites. *It is almost impossible that they will not in the end succeed in throwing off the yoke of the European outsider* (emphasis mine). By that time the descendant of the negro may be as intellectual as the Athenian...we shall then simply be dealing with another civilized nation of non-Aryan blood.<sup>56</sup>

## **Slavery**

He was shocked to discover the history of his people did not start with the coming of the whites. When the last bridge between blacks and whites was burned down, the only way left to communicate was through violence: the war, the chimurenga.

Alexander Kanengoni, *Echoing Silences*<sup>57</sup>

Tying together these three factors – European extractive colonialism; blacks’ subjugation to whites; and ethnic splits and divisions within black populations – is the issue of slavery. The reality of Africa’s history of slavery amplifies, but does not clarify, arguments as to the continent-wide propensity to state failure. Harvard economist Nathan Nunn has drawn a direct line of causality between those nations (not, at that time, independent states) that were the most heavily ravaged by export of their people into slavery through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and those which are most prone to failure today. He strengthens his argument by proving the inverse: those nations least affected by the slave trade, including Botswana and South Africa, are today the most relatively successful<sup>58</sup>.

Nunn is careful to point out one fact that most Western observers ignore: much of the slave trade was within, not outside of, the African continent, with black Africans buying and selling other black Africans. In the four mass slave trades from the 1400s through the 1800s, three were African-on-African. This pattern echoes in the underlying conditions of failure today, in particular in the current Sudan crisis, which was

precipitated by modern black-on-black slavery with the added aggravating factor of Arab-African tensions.

Nunn concludes that the results of the slave trades- systemically, uniquely African and uniquely damaging - are not an African mistrust of white rule or of white nations, but an *African mistrust of other Africans*:

Research already strongly suggests that the raiding of Africans by Africans triggered deep ethnic splits and a collapse of state systems. Human labor always flows from poorer areas to richer areas. Nunn has found that the countries he identified as having the most slaves taken are also the countries that have the most ethnic fractionalization today. It may well be that the ethnic fault lines driving Africa's worst conflicts have powerful roots in slavery, which required Africans to turn on one another.<sup>59</sup>

### **Modern African State Failure**

*What stratagems, erroneous, mutinous and unnatural,*

*This deadly quarrel daily doth beget!*

It is the dichotomy of Africa that is the most frustrating for the Westerner. People starve to death atop gorgeous, fertile farmland; Africans subsist hand-to-mouth but work in diamond mines; western aid dollars flow like a river into the subcontinent and vaporize without effect; the most cheerful and giving of people are brutalized by the most incompetent and inhuman regimes.

Africa is where “weak states are most prevalent,”<sup>60</sup> where that weakness seems insurmountable, where weakness can devolve most swiftly into failure, and where underlying conditions of failure can lead to the rare category of collapse. In Foreign Policy's 2007 index, eight of the world's ten most-unstable failed states are in Africa

below the Sahara (see Table 1.) The other two, Iraq (#2) and Afghanistan (#8), are suffering as the battlegrounds for active theater war.

Table 1: *Foreign Policy Journal's* "Failed States Index," 2005-2007

	2007	2006	2005	
Sudan	1	1	3	Collapsed
Somalia	3	7	5	Collapsed
Democratic Republic Congo	7	2	2	Collapsed/Failed <sup>61</sup>
Zimbabwe	4	5	15	Failed
Chad	5	6	7	Failed
Ivory Coast	6	3	1	Failed
Guinea	9	11	16	Failed
Central African Republic	10	13	20	Failed

Analyzing African states which have failed, and their lessons and indicators (or what Fall termed "symptoms") for those which will fail and breed a significant insurgency, brings the scholar continually up against Fall's admonition that "one can do almost anything with brute force except salvage an unpopular government"<sup>62</sup> The states below the Sahel share many of the characteristics – underlying economic conditions above all, but also political troubles and social - which indicate and underlie state failure, and which lead to instability and insurgency.

With underlying conditions – economic, political and social - guiding an academic analysis of the likelihood of significant insurgency in African failed states, case

studies are illustrative. Political scientist Barbara Geddes, who defines her argument in the title of her paper “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get,” is intrigued with selection bias in comparative political studies, and asserts that

if we (political scientists) want to understand something, for example, revolution, we select one or more occurrences and subject them to scrutiny. The problem with selecting cases...stems from the logic of explanation. The two tasks crucial to testing any hypothesis are to identify the universe of cases to which the hypothesis should apply, and to find or develop measures of the variables. (C)hoosing cases on the basis of their scores on (a) dependent variable may bias the conclusions. Apparent causes that all the selected cases have in common may turn out to be just as common among cases in which the effect they were supposed to have caused has not occurred.<sup>63</sup>

Geddes goes on to say, however, that “cases selected on the dependent variable are ideal for...developing insights” but “by themselves cannot test the theories they propose and *hence cannot contribute* to the accumulation of theoretical knowledge (emphasis mine).”<sup>64</sup>

### **The African Big Man : Tribal Chief and Insurgent**

#### *Now arms must rule*

In the 1960s, sub-Saharan African states proved Teddy Roosevelt correct, throwing out their European colonial rulers, who were mostly happy to leave. Immediately, a seam opened: as oppressive and racist as the white man was, he was also competent, creating the structure and the institutions for governance. He did not, however, train the black man to govern himself. In his sudden absence, these institutions collapsed. The African fundamental tradition of rule by a chief is not easily ignored, and into this vacuum rushed men to take advantage. Ridding themselves of white, European,

racist, arrogant, patrimonial, extractive dictators, these new states, looking for rulers, replaced them with African black ones. Yale professor David Apter pointed out in a 1962 paper that there is

a characteristic desire of Africans for a strong man who will be powerful and pure, leading the nation to harmony and achievement. This is particularly true when bitter rivalry between parties divides the public. The greater the rivalry, the more people...are less willing to accept the dominance of a party other than their own. Hence they may look to an outside force to save them from themselves.<sup>65</sup>

This is the too-common African Big Man – Lumumba, Mugabe, Amin, Mobutu, Aidid, Kagame, Charles Taylor, al-Bashir, Kabila, Deby – who either creates state failure, or uses existing failure, as a matrix in which to grow a movement and elevate himself to power. He provides the accelerant, he gives the people someone to blame for their problems, he weakens the standing regime and seizes the moment to trigger insurgency, riding the wave of crowd dynamics. He is the people's new chief, in the absence (or with the blessing) of the real one.

Use of the case study method, with Geddes' warnings as background, will nonetheless inform and compel the interested analyst of these movements. These case studies run the gamut of violence, and are united only by one factor: the effective Big Man/Big Man leader and his rhetoric of violence (or, in the case of Botswana, the lack of such rhetoric,) working in a seam.

In the end, in analyzing African state failure and insurgency,

it is tempting to think of (African) wars as being about right and wrong, black and white. On the whole, it was a war of race. But it was also a war of clashing nations and conflicting ideals. Africa was in the throes of a postcolonial massacre. The liberators of many African states had learned too well the vile lessons of their erstwhile oppressors, and had turned their jaws – sometimes literally – onto their own people.<sup>66</sup>

## **Success: Botswana**

*I have not stopp'd mine ears to their demands,*

*My mildness hath allay'd their swelling griefs.*

*I have not been desirous of their wealth.*

*When the lion fawns upon the lamb,*

*The lamb will never cease to follow him.*

Botswana is the exception that proves the rule. This poor, landlocked, sub-Saharan state should have weakened and failed along with the rest of its neighborhood, suffering as it does from all the same underlying conditions as do the other failed states nearby. Botswana declared independence from Britain in 1966, has huge stretches of desert and a tiny, uneducated population, has no access to the sea, and faced a 1990s HIV/AIDS crisis in which the mother-to-child transmission rate approached 40%. It is near or bordered on three sides by failing states (Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe), all of whom export violence across borders at the whims of local warlords. Botswana was exposed to enormous volatility, moving as it did from complete, abject dependence on Britain to a diamond strike in the late 1960s. Such states elsewhere in Africa failed, slowly or quickly.

But Botswana thrived, due completely to rational, fair government at the hands of a visionary, power-sharing leader who insisted on using diamond wealth to build infrastructure and run a liberal democracy, “tolerant of opposition activity, where the rule of law was held in respect...holding free and fair elections.”<sup>67</sup> The case of Botswana proves the point: the Big Man leader, once in power, is the key to the future of the state.

If he is a good man, a man who can rule with diffused power, in the mold of a Mogae or a Mandela, his state will prosper. If he is a too-typical African tyrant, his state will fail.

Leaders long before independence moved Botswana slowly along, starting power-sharing and training programs with the British as early as the 1920s, writing a constitution in 1961, and gradually adapting themselves to a stepwise handover of power in September 1966. Sir Seretse Khama, Oxford-trained, knighted by the Queen and unusually gifted, won the first set of elections, in 1965, becoming Prime Minister, and was the natural Big Man to take power upon the birth of the new nation the following year. Khama was himself an actual tribal chief, giving up leadership of the Ngwato to rule the country instead.

It is critical to note, however, that upon independence in 1966, Botswana could have gone into the abyss as did so many of its neighbors. Khama was married to a white woman, creating an instant problem with apartheid neighbors Rhodesia and South Africa. He had a refugee problem, in particular from Rhodesia, as war victims fled into Botswana and burdened an already-troubled economy. In 1966, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita annual income below \$200,<sup>68</sup> and a struggling, rural economy.

Botswana struck diamonds in 1967, at Orapa and Jwaneng, and struck copper and nickel at Selibe-Pikwe<sup>69</sup>, but avoided the resource curse. Suddenly, the “cleavage between rich and poor was deep,”<sup>70</sup> adding a relative disparity to other problems. The Big Man, Khama, knew that a seam had opened, but insisted on orderly and intelligent use of the sudden riches of the diamond mines, investing that money in infrastructure,



ensuring that “over 50% of the profits went back (into the economy) rather than being siphoned off abroad, as had happened in neighboring countries....”<sup>71</sup>

Khama died in 1980, and was succeeded in orderly fashion by his long-serving Vice President, Quett Masire. To this day, Botswana depends on the diamond trade for over 80% of its exports, and for nearly half of its GDP<sup>72</sup>, but has never had conflict over such enclave production. Botswana is in the “exceptional” category of diamond-rich African countries at peace, and the journey down that road to post-colonial peace was begun by the “good leadership of Presidents Khama and Masire.”<sup>73</sup>

Botswana continues to grow, powered by an economic engine fueled by coherent, populist government policies. The growth of Botswana is not of the short-term, resource-cursed windfall variety of its neighbors, but rather is the result of sustained government planning. In 2006, the World Bank funded a 21-member Commission on Growth and Development, chaired by a Nobel Prize-winning economist, to track, back to 1950, countries in the (sometimes formerly) developing world whose economies grew at a rate of 7% a year, or more, for 25 of those years. In May 2008, the list of 13 countries was released: Botswana was the only African country named, joining success stories such as Singapore, Brazil, China and Japan.

This commission went further, publishing their findings on why these countries had excelled, and insisted that “governments had a far greater role to play”<sup>74</sup> in GNP growth than previously thought. These governments did not need to be democracies in the Western sense, or even proponents of truly free markets. Autocratic governments – primarily of the Singapore/China stripe -fared as well as did democracies, but all

governments shared two traits: they needed to be “credible,” and needed to spend on infrastructure.<sup>75</sup>

When Masire stepped down in 1998, he in turn was succeeded by his Vice President, Festus Mogae. In April 2008, Mogae stepped down from office a year early, to better prepare his successor to rule.<sup>76</sup> Such a (true) Big Man leader stands in sharp contrast to his neighboring Big Man ruler, Zimbabwe’s Mugabe. Mugabe’s rapacious 28-year grip on power is unaffected by his losing the March 2008 elections or international condemnation of his autocratic rule. Zimbabwe’s inflation rate is now such the currency is worth less than its paper. Legitimate challengers to power are ruthlessly suppressed. By contrast, the first three Presidents Botswana has had since independence – their state chiefs, their Big Men - were able to not only grow Botswana, but also to sustain that growth despite development indicators portending state failure and insurgency.

## **Failure: Sudan**

*Write in the dust this sentence with thy blood.*

*Butchers and villains! Bloody cannibals!*

Sudan, with Somalia and Congo-Kinshasa, is the ultimate expression of state failure: the collapsed state. Two million of its citizens have died in the past decade, with two million more displaced out into the Darfur desert. It has lost the monopoly on lethal force, it has lost control within its borders, and it is unable to function as a coherent entity beyond its borders on the world stage. Like its neighbors, Sudan is riven by ethnic, tribal and religiously motivated violence. It borders other failed states: Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is possessed of the resource curse: potent oil reserves, currently the subject of worldwide pressure as the Chinese government's extractive diplomacy comes under scrutiny. Sudan also has a port on the Red Sea, with a very short journey to Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, which should give it an advantage in global commerce and in getting its oil to market.

Sudan's leader, who was himself a Big Man insurgent ruler taking power in a seam, has been in power for nearly twenty years, has a deathgrip on the country, and enforces rule with genocidal violence, thus keeping the insurgencies alive. Sudan's leadership under President Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir is a product of one insurgency (in 1989), and it is in the midst of another. Like those of its neighbors, warring factions within the Sudan cross borders and export violence into other countries (noticeably Chad and the Central African Republic). The violence in Darfur has become shorthand for all that is wrong in Africa, and its horrifying centrality on the world stage has not changed

the raw violence, starvation and genocidal death that continue. An estimated 234,000<sup>77</sup> refugees have fled the Darfur fighting and flowed into Chad. Sudan's borders are crossed in the other direction, as well, as Chadian money flows to fellow members of the Zagawas (the tribe to which Chad's leader, Idriss Deby, belongs) who are the foundation of much of the current insurgent movement in Darfur.

Sudan has two nuances to its modern insurgency, however. First, the continuing violence in Sudan is based on Arab-African tensions, which have divided the country north and south and led to genocide and black-on-black slavery. In the same way that some African states, like Somalia, should not be states at all, Sudan should be two. Arab Muslims dominate in the north, and hold power under the Islamic Bashir, and African Christians and animists control the south. Its cleavage is not religious, but ethnic: the Arabs view the Africans as nearly subhuman, while the African nomads in the south view themselves (correctly) as an oppressed minority.

The second nuance, and leading back to the first: Sudan is not a former colony of a European power; rather, it was colonized by the Ottoman Egyptians.<sup>78</sup> Though the first African state to declare independence, in 1956, Sudan has never been able to stand as a functioning, coherent state, and since that time "has either been failed or failing," in a state of nearly perpetual civil war since 1955.<sup>79</sup>

Sudan's history is one of government by what Prunier and Gisselquist call an "ethnically bewildering" smattering of nationalities, none of them African, none of them competent. With the arrival of the Ottomans, it served not as a colony in a traditional sense of an income-generating proxy state, but simply as a provider of slaves. No strong central government was established, no legacy of competence handed down to the

natives; even the British rule in Sudan was on behalf of Egypt, not England.<sup>80</sup> With the departure of foreign occupiers in 1956, Sudan began a period of coup and countercoup from which it has never recovered.

Sudan has two seams. First, it is one of those states on the Sahel seam between the Arab world and the African one, thus lending it geostrategic importance of place if not economy. Illustrative of its place: Sudan is the southern border of Egypt, and the northern border of Uganda and of Congo-Kinshasa.

The second seam has come from discovery of oil, that “greasy coin of the realm” in the Middle East and Africa,<sup>81</sup> beneath its sand in the late 1970s. This discovery made it an extractive battleground as well. The seam is in getting that oil to market: the oil is in the south, beneath lands of nomadic African tribes, while the port is in the Arab, Islamic north. This is an existential problem, as Adam Smith’s warnings<sup>82</sup> about problems in getting commerce to sea *across* states applies even *within* a country as dysfunctional as Sudan. The government tried to solve the problem by simply disbanding the southern government, redrawing maps to include the oil fields into a northern-controlled province and thereby seize control of the oil fields. This action ignited a 25-year war, still ongoing.

With two seams open, two Big Man insurgencies arose. In 1983, the army mutinied, and the first insurgency began. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood, splitters from the army and beneath the banner of a National Islamic Front, overthrew the democratically elected government, finally consolidating their power in 1989 under Hassan al-Turabi and installing Big Man General Bashir as President. Since that time,

nearly 2 million people have been killed in systematic fashion, and the state has lost control of its borders, its people, its internal security, and its military force.

The second insurgency, in southern Sudan, began in the late 1980s, led by former NIF leader John Garang, who was originally sent to southern Sudan to recruit for the Brotherhood and ended up leading an insurgent effort, the SPLA, against the government. Janjaweed militias in the west, allied with the Bashir government and originating in local militias armed by the government, had spun off from government control in the mid-1980s. Garang pulled together warring factions and launched an insurgency against the government.

Garang's leadership began a downward spiral into civil war: into the vacuum in 1989 stepped the Big Man, al-Bashir, then an army Colonel, whose successful insurgency led to the RCC junta in June of that year. Bashir has ruled since, presiding over the complete devolution of Sudan into collapse, with over four million people displaced, murdered or starved to death. Militias - the government janjaweed - have prosecuted a genocidal campaign against southern, African civilians, sometimes following them into Chad to rape and murder. They have also staged incursions over that western border with Chad and have ignited yet another ongoing insurgency, that of Darfur's (Zagawa) Southern Liberation Army, ethnically and tribally linked to Chadian Zagawa militias and the Chadian Deby government, against Bashir's government in Khartoum.

These insurgent movements lack Big Man leaders- they are chronic, but not existential, problems. However, such insurgencies give the Bashir regime cause to send further force into the Darfur region, under the pretense of putting down a guerrilla uprising, which in turn draws more fighters from the region and across the border from

Chad, continuing the death spiral which has led to Sudan's Foreign Policy rank as the world's most unstable state.<sup>83</sup>

Such violent statist overreaction, mass civilian murder and displacement, all set against the backdrop of genocide make a matrix for failure and insurgency. Bashir's actions in both the west – Darfur – and the south prove that while low-level insurgencies are destabilizing, government reaction to insurgent movements, whether they are counterinsurgencies in fact or only in name, are often worse. Bashir's counterinsurgency efforts to control a restive south and an anarchic west have led to the deaths of over two million people and the displacement of two million more.<sup>84</sup> Sudan is a collapsed state, and is proof of what the violent, rapacious Big Man ruler can do.

## **Collapse and Insurgency**

### **The Democratic Republic of The Congo**

*This man, whom hand to hand I slew in fight*

*May be possessed with some store of crowns*

*And I, that haply take them from him now*

*May yet ere night yield both my life and them*

*To some man else, as this dead man doth me*

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a collapsed state, a battleground, and the modern graveyard for innocent millions. Congo<sup>85</sup> is both the product of insurgency and the matrix in which several now grow. Its collapse is both the cause and result of the constant insurgency in which it has been engulfed since independence in 1960, and is the direct cause of innocent deaths in numbers which rival those of any conflict in modern history. Congo expert Rene Lemarchand calls the modern period since 1998 a “descent into hell,”<sup>86</sup> while academic Severine Autesserre, calling modern Congo “the world’s deadliest conflict since World War II” puts the Congo death toll from murder, neglect, famine, random violence and organized war from 1996 to 2008 at over four million, and climbing by over 1000 innocent people per day.<sup>87</sup>

Congo has been ruled by three insurgent Big Men: insurgent Patrice Lumumba threw out the Belgians in 1960; insurgent Mobutu Sese Seko toppled Lumumba and ruled from 1964 to 1997; insurgent Laurent Kabila toppled Mobutu and ruled from 1997 to 2001.



Joseph Kabila, son of Laurent, was placed in power after Kabila *pere* was murdered in a coup, and has ruled since 2001. The current insurgent movements, filling the vacuum of leadership in Kinshasa, are almost too numerous, confusing, overlapping, and coalescing to recount. Currently, six neighboring countries<sup>88</sup> are involved in coup attempts, pure insurgencies, plots, palace intrigue, support of and coups against the Kabila regime, armed incursion, guerrilla movement underwriting and proxy war.

### **The Belgians**

(The Belgian rule of the Congo) is the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience.

Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness*<sup>89</sup>

“(F)rom 1885 to 1960, Congo’s population had marinated in humiliation.”<sup>90</sup>

Created and ruled as a personal (not state) empire by a Belgian king, Leopold II, the Congo Free State was at one point “an area nearly one million square miles,”<sup>91</sup> before being partitioned out to Belgian overlords. The Belgians viewed Zaire as a potent source of rubber with a built-in, docile labor force, and as they continued to uncover further riches – first copper, then uranium and diamonds – the Belgians grew more intent on ruling forever, installing good infrastructure but with a brutal, racist subtext of African subjugation and slavery.

To Europeans, Belgian Congo was the very image of deepest, darkest Africa, fact melding with images of Stanley in the jungles, and Conrad and his Mr. Kurtz journeying into the heart of darkness. Such dark people in such a dark place, of course, could not be trusted to vote, let alone govern themselves, and European control was absolute.

## **Insurgency I: Lumumba**

*This is the palace of the fearful king*

In the late 1950s, the rise of Patrice Lumumba - still today the archetype of the intense, intelligent, insurgent African leader – brought what promised to be an end to the humiliation. Basing his political strength on a power base of the eastern tribes, and combining that support with fiery speeches extolling neighboring countries that were moving toward independence from French rule, Lumumba united Congolese Africans from multiple tribes and parties behind him and his MNC (Mouvement National Congolais) party. He insisted that the Belgians leave *in toto*, even convincing the United Nations to send forces to expel the oppressive European regime.

Like Somali insurgent leaders would do 30 years later, Lumumba met with American government officials as head of a state which was coming but did not yet exist. Like fellow insurgent Nelson Mandela in South Africa, he was jailed in a regime effort to shut him up as he grew more vocal and his writings grew more incisive, and like Mandela wrote a book while in prison outlining his vision for the country. Like Mandela's, his genius was in creating a transcendent narrative creating unity among the tribes.

Young *New York Times* reporter David Halberstam, fresh out of Harvard and looking to make a name for himself by covering the ugliest conflict he could find, observed in 1962 that

the immense Congo, with its ethnic groupings and suspicion between tribes, had always been tribally oriented before independence. Patrice Lumumba, as a nationalist, made considerable headway against tribalism. As a detribalized figure urging national unity, (he) represented the major pan-African force. The post-independence period was a crucial time, for it was then that the power of the tribal chiefs had to be broken and an illiterate people made aware that they are a nation,

not a collection of tribes. Instead...in the vacuum created by the end of Belgian colonial rule, the tribal chiefs reasserted their power. To most Congolese, the chiefs are the most important symbol of authority.<sup>92</sup>

The Belgians, for their part, wanted no part of a French Algerian-style occupation, which they viewed as a “frightening illustration of the cost of prolonged colonial conflict”<sup>93</sup>, and agreed to withdraw from Congo while quietly maneuvering with black moderates to continue running the country. However, under pressure from both sides – violent black nationalist insurgents protesting their rule from within the country, and white peers in the United Nations protesting more formally– the Belgians gave up in the summer of 1960.

Thus ended the first Congo insurgency: a nationalist uprising, led by a poorly educated, disaffected but intelligent and resonant elite, coalesced around a dynamic leader against a foreign regime. This insurgency was binary: black on white; African against European; poor rural laborers throwing out wealthy educated elites; African tribal nationalists versus racist European patricians from across the sea.

Nationalism in the Congo developed as a complex dialectic between the stunned and increasingly demoralized Belgian administration, an elite which swiftly raised its demands, and a mass which now began to play a major role. The spread of political consciousness was accompanied by a parallel process of ethnic mobilization. The cultural categories (served) as foci for this newly politicized self-awareness (for) the politicization of ethnicity in the era of nationalist politics.<sup>94</sup>

And thus in 1960 did Lumumba – with the help of a quiet, skulking, scheming chief of staff named Joseph Mobutu – become the first of the African insurgents to take power as a head of state, putting into words to the Belgian king the thoughts of African nationalists across the continent: “We are no longer your monkeys.”<sup>95</sup>

## **Insurgency II: Mobutu**

*Since thou wert King – as who is king but thou?*

*The commonwealth hath daily run to wreck*

Congo was completely unprepared for self-rule in 1960, and immediately began to fail:

Quite deliberately, the Belgians (had) set out to isolate the Congo from any outside influence and to stifle the emergence of a black elite. In the top ranks of the civil service no more than three Congolese out of 1400 held posts. By 1960 the sum total of (black) university graduates was thirty. At the end of the 1959-1960 academic year, only 136 children completed secondary education. There were no Congolese doctors, no secondary school teachers, no army officers.<sup>96</sup>

The second insurgency in the Congo came quickly on the heels of the first. This one, begun within a month of the declaration of independence, was of a disaffected army against its own rulers<sup>97</sup>. Mobutu, while assisting Lumumba in overthrowing Belgian rule, was at the same time cutting quiet deals with both the Belgians and the Americans, feeding information to both countries, and creating separate peaces with Brussels, Paris and the CIA.<sup>98</sup> He was thus positioned for a rise to power, which he began immediately, launching an insurgency against his own rulers in September 1960...two months after Lumumba's bold words to the Belgians.

If Lumumba's Big Man insurgency was fueled by interpersonal values of pride and tribal allegiance, Mobutu's Big Man insurgency was fueled by welfare values of pure fear, poverty, and hunger. Both the army and the country itself had been led by competent white men now departed, and both institutions fell immediately apart. The army's desires were simple: they were unpaid and unfed, and were angry and wanted

redress. The soldiers backed Mobutu, a Colonel then 29 years old, who had turned on Lumumba immediately after independence and now demanded his ouster. Maneuvering for position, both foreign and internal, Mobutu solidified power, drew tribes to him, and won control of the government. In January 1961, Patrice Lumumba was kidnapped, tortured, then executed by Mobutu's men, under direction of a Belgian officer, and his body was hacked to pieces and dropped in sulfuric acid. His rule had lasted ten weeks.

### **Insurgency III, Part One: Tshombe**

*Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind*

Mobutu's insurgency presaged forty years of turmoil. Mobutu himself was still an insurgent, unable in 1961 to consolidate power in the capital of Leopoldville, but he was for the moment a nervous first among rebels. Swiftly, to the south, rose a challenge: the remnants of a southern guerrilla war against Lumumba which gathered strength against Mobutu, based in the southern province of Katanga. Like Mobutu's insurgency, the Katanga insurgency was led by a Big Man leader, Moise Tshombe. Like Mobutu, this Big Man created a compelling narrative, nationalist call to action, this time among the Katanga tribes. Like Mobutu, Tshombe used a chaotic situation as a matrix for growth and a seam in which to build his nationalist movement, knowing that "in the absence of any developed national feeling...the instinctive recourse was to the ethnic group."<sup>99</sup>

Tshombe's insurgency was built around the CONAKAT (the Katanga tribal federation), which built itself not *for* something, but *against* a perception of ethnic

dominance by other tribes. Tshombe drove this insurgency to the brink of creating his own country, able to “defy the central government”<sup>100</sup> for almost four years, but ultimately coming up short. In a bizarre but subtly brilliant denouement that could happen only in Africa, Mobutu, himself not really in control of the country, offered the post of Prime Minister to the defeated Tshombe, who in turn used his mercenary armies to crush the northern rebellion.<sup>101</sup> In so doing, Mobutu solved two insurgencies at once: the one in Katanga defeated by removal and co-opting of its Big Man; the one in the east defeated by military might. Mobutu consolidated power and took firm control of Congo in 1965.

### **Insurgency III, Part Two- Kabila and Che**

This is the history of a failure.

Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *The African Dream*, 1967.

That rebellion to the east had been of tribes uniting with remnants of what had been Lumumba’s party, using the seam as Tshombe was doing, pinning Mobutu to his precarious hold on Leopoldville. This movement involved two interesting personalities. First, it was led by a 26-year-old Katangan named Laurent Kabila, who was to reappear in Congo’s future. Second, as the movement took hold west of Lake Tanganyika, Kabila received an advisor on loan from Fidel Castro’s Havana: the fabled insurgent Ernesto “Che” Guevara.

Che’s idea was to build an insurgency training camp in eastern Congo, and as Osama bin Laden would succeed in doing 30 years later, Fidel Castro envisioned himself

as the father of a clearinghouse for “confronting imperialism around the world, notably American imperialism.”<sup>102</sup> Che was appalled, though, at the undisciplined, unruly rebels, and in particular with Kabila, whom he viewed as a lazy drunk.<sup>103</sup> Without a dedicated Big Man leader, this insurgency faltered, fizzled and failed. When Tshombe’s army, combined with Mobutu’s muscle, destroyed the budding eastern revolution, Castro’s ideas of an insurgency academy went with it.

The two men departed. Che, embarrassed at his failure to export revolution and not ready to face the revolutionary ideologues in Havana, decamped to Tanzania to write of his failure in the Congo. Kabila too ended up in Tanzania, to enjoy his prostitutes and money and drink.

Che would very soon be dead. Kabila would much later be reborn.

### **The Insurgent Fails as Ruler: Act One**

*Then you perceive the body of our kingdom*

*How foul it is, what rank diseases grow*

*And with what danger, near the heart of it.*

General Joseph Mobutu (he had promoted himself from Colonel upon taking control) was now the Big Man, the insurgent preparing to rule. But the skills of the jungle fighter, the tactics of the fiery insurgent, are not the skills and tactics of the ruler. Mobutu immediately put into motion the machinery for state failure, and thereby for the insurgencies to follow.

Like many men who seized power in this time of unyoking colonies from European wagons, Mobutu had things to prove. He himself was Ngbandi, one of the lesser (but apocryphally bellicose) tribes, a rube from the jungle constantly aware of his humble upbringing, insistent on proving his manhood. He could be to Westerners the modern, smiling, reasonable African, “all things to all men, holding up a mirror to interlocutors that reflected back their wishes.” With Africans he was both the fiery insurgent jungle fighter and the benevolent tribal chief to lead them from Belgian rule, who “could treat people with kid gloves or he could treat them with a steel fist.”<sup>104</sup> His cult of personality, which would echo through the decades and across the continent in the murderous kleptocracies of Mugabe, Amin, Aidid and Deby, began the slide toward the abyss.

To consolidate power, and to appear a progressive African ruler, Mobutu held an election in 1970. The results were grotesque: of 10,131,828 votes cast, the total for Mobutu was 10,131,669, with 157 against.<sup>105</sup> Joseph Mobutu, now ruler for life, gave himself the more-African name Mobutu Sese Seko, and decreed to the country itself a new name: Zaire.

### **The African Caligula**

*Now I am seated, as my soul delights,*

*And now what rests, but that we spend the time*

*With stately triumphs*

*Such as befits the pleasure of the court?*



For more than 30 years, Mobutu Sese Seko lorded over Zaire. He ignored the people, remained oblivious to his soldiers rampaging through the streets, sacked the treasury, and outsourced violence necessary to keep control of underlings. He was more interested in building palaces and buying jets and drinking champagne<sup>106</sup> as his country slid down the scale of failure.

He was every inch the archetype of the overweight, brutal African dictator, out of touch with what was happening around him. Ignoring the chaos in the streets, Mobutu began systematically to dismantle the monetary system, keeping tight hold on the power to tax (Bernard Fall's most important indicator of government power) but simultaneously destabilizing the country and making it more beholden to his rule. In June 1967, Mobutu had replaced the Congolese franc with the "zaire," pegging that currency's value to an arbitrary round number of 1 zaire = 1000 francs. In one day, Congo's currency devalued by 70%<sup>107</sup>, and its new value was based not on gold reserves (as it had been beneath the Belgian rulers) but on international credit, extended by western countries anxious to get their hands on Congo's mineral wealth and currying favor with Mobutu.

As the U.S. dollar devalued against the zaire, the exchange rate of 1 \$US = 0.5 zaire remained unchanged; the Congolese currency was therefore untethered from the realities of international financial markets. These measures actually worked for several years, as revenue inflows directly to the government increased until the early 1970s, but at the cost of infrastructure improvements. It also cost the support of Congolese agriculture, which fell from 21% of Congo's GDP to 13% in the year 1968 alone.<sup>108</sup>

Teetering on the abyss of weakness and living off of the last remnants of Belgian competence, Zaire began to weaken seriously in the early 1970s. Mobutu lost his control

on lethal force as armed gangs (mostly unpaid soldiers) roamed the streets, setting up checkpoints for extortion and robbery. Congo as a state began to rely less on traditional agriculture and more on the quick money of mineral resource extraction: cobalt, copper, and above all diamonds. Such a flow of cash, mostly in Western hard currency, made it easier for Mobutu and the wolves in Kinshasa to skim from the coffers. Mobutu, growing savvier each year in office, realized that foreign aid came with oversight and reporting and foreigners asking questions, and so avoided where possible any financial commitments to the western world.

As the 1970s led into the 1980s, Zaire continued its slide through weakness to failure. Finally, in the early 1990s Zaire collapsed, leaving “little more than a rotting carcass.”<sup>109</sup> The zaire currency became worthless (see attached graphic,) and inflation grew out of control. Mobutu was creating the seams which would lead to his overthrow.

### **The Internal Seam: The Tribes**

*Our people and our peers are both misled,  
Our treasures seized, our soldiers put to flight,  
And, as thou seest, ourselves in heavy plight.*

As he ran the economics of the country to ground, so too did Mobutu destroy the social fabric of the Congo. Africans who had for generations lived side-by-side, all poor but all equal, all African, began to resent one another. Mobutu's regime, in which Africans themselves were suddenly rich and invested with both mantles of formal power and the informal power of life and death over the unwashed, introduced a seam. There

were now “goats among the sheep”<sup>110</sup> (or, more accurately, lions among the lambs,) a relative disparity which had not previously existed:

The entire African population had had the role of proletariat, with the colonialist-imperialist system filling the role of the exploiting class. Before independence, there was very little economic stratification...the real economic cleavage, like the political cleavage, was between African and European. Only after independence, when the elite gained access to well-remunerated political positions did economic stratification appear.<sup>111</sup>

The more uncertain things became, the more disparity the average Congolese experienced. The way of life they had known, tribal and based on farming in the rich soil of the huge country, was choked off by Mobutu’s policies, and changed to a chaotic, poor life of bewildering urban density. What had changed for the Congolese as a people was inside their heads and their hearts, and as they grew more estranged from their country, and left the land on which they had lived for the urban core, they gravitated to the only support structure they had: their tribal group.

The cities grew crowded with immigrants from the countryside, and these people brought their ethnic allegiances with them and began to divide themselves along those lines. Those lines of allegiance were primarily vertical, within the ethnic group, while horizontal allegiances between tribes, hundreds of years in the making, began to erode as people migrated into the cities. Formerly allied tribes (those from neighboring areas, or those with a history of working together for survival) began to pull apart, focused inward on their brethren, rather than outward on the larger group.

In all of this, the state was forgotten, the third or fourth in line for polity allegiance. A people which had been unhappy but united was now more unhappy, and splintering. Such an environment is ripe for exploitation by a Big Man insurgent to put voice to simmering discontent.

### **The External Seam: Kivu and Rwanda**

In (the early 1990s), wars in Africa had changed their tone; they had turned in on themselves – tribal, hand-to-hand, and indistinct and no longer the black-and-white wars of the liberation days.<sup>112</sup>

In the 1980s, and into the early 1990s, a seam developed along Congo's eastern border with Rwanda (see maps), in the Great Lakes border area known as North Kivu and South Kivu (or Nord-Kivu and Sud-Kivu.) The ethnic Banyarwanda people, divided into Hutu (the ruling class in Rwanda) and Tutsi (refugees from Rwanda, whom the Hutu had driven across the border), began to come apart.

The Tutsi herdsmen had been favorites of the ruling Belgians in the early- and mid-1900s, and with their lighter skin were viewed as “closer in kind to the Europeans,”<sup>113</sup> and given higher status in the country. The Hutu were “shorter (and) darker”<sup>114</sup> and had a lower-class status until two post-colonial purges, in 1962 and 1973, drove the Tutsi from Rwanda and put Hutu leaders in power. Those Tutsi fled on foot across the border, into the Kivu region and even into Zaire itself, and set up immense refugee camps.

Now, 20 years after the purges and split cleanly along ethnic lines, the groups' roles had reversed. Rwanda's ruling Hutu, 20 years in power, viewed the Tutsi as unwashed, unwelcome invaders who should have remained in their camps across the border, while the Tutsi viewed the Hutu as violent and oppressive, turncoats to their hereditary people.

Hutus must stop having mercy on the Tutsis.

Eighth Commandment, *Kangura* Hutu newspaper,  
Kigali, Rwanda<sup>115</sup>

Through 1994 and 1995, the situation deteriorated, and a true genocide began as Rwanda's Hutus, backed by Mobutu from across the border, exerted control over the Kivu region, murdering Tutsi refugees trying to get back into Rwanda. The ethnic split was so acute that as the genocide accelerated, Hutu and Tutsi married couples split, and were even forced to murder one another for their ethnic background.

The groundwork of instability, destabilization, frustration and relative disparity was thus established. Ethnic tensions had come to a boil, dispossessed people were living in squalor apart from their homeland, and two neighboring countries under oppressive dictatorships failed in parallel. A seam opened along their border. Against the backdrop of state failure in both Zaire and Rwanda, two insurgencies arose in Kivu, in the Great Lakes region on the Zaire-Rwanda border.

#### **Insurgency IV: Rwigyema**

Between 1965 and 1989 Rwanda's GDP increased nearly 5 percent a year. There were advances in school enrollment and health care. Western donors (were) impressed by the government's commitment to rural development and to law and order...By 1993 Rwanda was effectively bankrupt, awash with refugees.<sup>116</sup>

The first insurgency pointed from Kivu into Rwanda. The Rwandese Patriotic Front, or RPF, a Tutsi movement, pulled in disparate oppressed and angry Tutsis from the Great Lakes diaspora, and began to plot how to take back their territory in Rwanda. The RPF had begun to take shape in the late 1980s, but no one man was able to pull Tutsis together into a coherent, significant insurgent movement. When Uganda's regime dismissed General Fred Rwigyema, a Tutsi who himself had grown up in one of these camps, he took 4000 Tutsis with him and took control of his people's insurgency.

Like Sudan, Rwanda had little economic strength of its own, but also like Sudan it had physical position that gave it gravity to the white world. Rwanda sat astride a seam, the “borderline between Francophone and Anglophone Africa” which gave it geostrategic importance in the eyes of the French, who in 1990 rallied in support of the genocidal Hutu regime in Kigali. This support, combined with the regime’s close coordination with Mobutu across the border, kept the Hutu in power...but further angered the Tutsi refugees in camps along the Zaire-Rwanda border.

In Rwigyema the Tutsis had at last found a “popular and highly respected military leader”<sup>117</sup> in whom to vest their trust in return to their homeland of Rwanda, a man who could add the military muscle to a political struggle. The nascent movement had its Big Man leader. Rwigyema moved too quickly, though, launching a premature invasion into Kigali in October 1990. This attempt was swiftly crushed, and Rwigyema was killed, but a seed had been planted. The underlying conditions were there, while the need for a Big Man leader remained.

### **Insurgency V: The Napoleon of Africa**

*Men may talk of kings,*

*And why not I?*

*My crown is in my heart, not on my head.*

Picking up Rwigyema’s mantle was the next true believer, Big Man leader of the Tutsi insurgency, Paul Kagame. Kagame had grown up with Rwigyema, had himself been a victim of Hutu brutality, and starting in 1991 became a true insurgent leader.

Canadian Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire, commander of UN forces attempting to sort out the Rwandan genocide, described the RPF as a textbook insurgency: “a small but highly effective military and political movement,” and an intelligence report later stated that the RPF was “slowly, calmly and coolly gaining terrain...installing Tutsis in areas already under their control.”<sup>118</sup> This is the classic, Bernard Fall insurgency: a political movement, using military force to achieve their aim of ruling a country or a people and controlling territory.

By 1994, Kagame had arrived in the big leagues, in the eyes of General Dallaire:

(Kagame) turned a ragtag group of guerrilla fighters into a force capable of holding its own against French soldiers in the field, not once but twice. The soldiers were clearly well-led, well-trained and motivated. The officers were young but clearly knew how to work their troops. They had won all recent contests because of their superior leadership, training, experience, frugality, discipline and morale. If Kagame was responsible for nurturing this force, he was a truly impressive leader and perhaps deserved the sobriquet that the media had given him: the Napoleon of Africa.<sup>119</sup>

## **Genocide**

*If murdering innocents be executing*

*Why, then thou art an executioner*

Why is it that the worst of everything that is evil and inhuman is to be found in Africa? What is wrong with us Africans?

Graca Machel, wife of Nelson Mandela<sup>120</sup>

Kagame's strength as insurgent leader, pressing in on Kigali from the border, cut both ways. In him, the Tutsi at last had a leader able to end their exile and restore them to their homeland. In him, too, the Hutu saw an opportunity. With his insurgency becoming a true existential threat, and Rwandans and other Africans alike beginning to

pay attention, they had the excuse they needed to finally wipe out the Tutsi. The Habyarimana dictatorship in Kigali set out for “extermination of the Tutsi of Rwanda to resolve, once and for all, the ethnic problem,”<sup>121</sup> and in April 1994 began a mass murder unmatched since that of the Nazis.

From April 1994 through June 1994, the Rwandan Hutu regime presided over the execution of over 800,000 Tutsi, Tutsi sympathizers, and even of Hutus they considered insufficiently enthusiastic about the killings.<sup>122</sup> The murders were carried out with the most face-to-face of weapons: machetes, knives, stones, bare hands. The horrors are almost beyond human comprehension: infants thrown into fast-moving rivers; parents forced to murder their own children; fathers forced to rape their daughters. This genocide was first ignored by the Western world, then wished away, and then, when it grew too large to ignore, was mishandled.

The graves are not yet quite full!

Hutu Radio Milles Collines, Rwanda, 6 April 1994

Lieutenant General Dallaire risked an end to his career in blatant insubordination, in a vain effort to make the world pay attention. As he literally screamed into telephones to New York for troops to stop the murders, the UN sent him the one group of soldiers in all the world guaranteed to make matters worse: Belgians, the hated former rulers of both Rwanda and Zaire. The Belgian troops proved lazy and uninterested in stopping the killings, and Dallaire’s Belgians were targeted, hunted down, provoked into violence, ambushed and killed, thus giving the Western world the excuse it needed to turn its back. The 1994 Rwanda genocide ended only when the Hutu ran out of Tutsi to kill.



The tables quickly turned. The Tutsi rebels under Kagame moved from Kivu, gathering strength as they went, and overthrew the Hutu regime in Kigali and took power in the summer of 1994. They now had their revenge. They drove the Hutu into exile, and now roles were reversed: Tutsis had the power in Kigali, the guns and the upper hand, and Hutus were the desperate, starving refugees, fleeing into Zaire, across the border away from their homeland with their belongings on their heads.

The world read the situation precisely backwards, and led by a Clinton administration suddenly stirred to action, leapt into the humanitarian crisis, sending men, food and muscle to protect and succor the Hutu refugees now flooding west out of Rwanda and over the border into the camps in Kivu and Zaire. Mixed in with innocent Hutu victims, though, were the same people who had just committed mass murder. Thus did the Western world provide aid and comfort to the perpetrators of the most appalling acts of genocide since those of the Nazis.

### **Insurgency VI: Kabila Pere**

*We are those which chased you from the field*

*And with colors spread*

*March'd through the city to the palace gates*

The second Kivu insurgency was pointed the other way: into Zaire itself. It too was sourced from among a dispossessed people, people without hope for the future, whose lives had been ruined, with raw ethnic animosity toward an unresponsive regime on which they could place specific anger for specific failures. It too was fueled by

relative disparity; it too took place against underlying conditions of poverty and squalor and a collapsed state; it too was triggered by one event and catalyzed by a Big Man leader.

This insurgent movement started in the same Kivu region as had the Rwigyema/Kagame insurgency, but went the other direction- deep into Zaire.

While no one in Zaire seriously contemplated launching an armed uprising against the still formidable Mobutu regime, the tragedy in Rwanda ignited a long fuse. There is no doubt, as Kagame himself later admitted, that Rwanda was the prime mover in the incitement and execution of the AFDL's campaign to topple the Mobutu regime...that eventually carried the insurgents to Kinshasa.<sup>123</sup>

The early 1990s collapse of Zaire, in every respect, should have spelled the end of the Mobutu regime, but the Western world, with its knack for always doing the right thing in the wrong way in Africa, kept him afloat. Having drained the treasury and bled the country dry, Mobutu needed funds to stay in power. Weakening within and without his borders, in his last Faustian bargain, he found those funds in Kivu, at the expense of the Rwandan genocide:

In the last nine months of 1994 alone, UNHCR and the aid organizations dedicated at least \$336 million to the Zairean part of the vast refugee operation, a sum that exceeded the Kinshasa government's total operating budget. The financial influx into this 100-mile strip of land along Lake Kivu marked a turning point. Funds (Mobutu) could neither control nor appropriate came pouring into Zaire. For a leader who depended on financial patronage for his survival, it was the final stage in a drawn-out process of economic marginalisation. Kivu's refugee camps taught Zaire's elite they no longer needed Mobutu to prosper, they also brought home to neighboring states that he was no longer a leader they could do business with.<sup>124</sup>

By 1996, the underlying conditions for insurgency were met:

- Zaire is effectively landlocked (see map.) It is usually referred to in scholarly works as part of central, not southern, Africa, though it does have a tiny stretch of

land, about 25 miles across, which reaches to the pirate-infested Gulf of Guinea. This path to export is well over 1000 miles from the interior of the country.

- Zaire is an enormous country, the third-largest in Africa. Such a far-flung empire is difficult to rule in the best conditions.
- Zaire was, and is today, completely dependent on an extractive economy in low-density, high-value items dependent on scarcity for elasticity of demand: gold, diamonds, cobalt, and copper. Smuggling, always a problem, grew worse as Mobutu's control of the country failed. Diamonds are, of course, the most easily-hidden of high-value items, and smuggling out of Angola and through Zaire, along with Mobutu's theft of diamond proceeds, made analysis of diamond production impossible. Diamonds were Congo's top export, and foreign earnings leader, in the period of 1994-1996.<sup>125</sup>
- The currency was worthless, Mobutu's economic policies having devalued the Zaire to zero. Mobutu pegged the zaire in 1967 at US\$1 = 0.5 zaire. The currency faltered, and then went into freefall (see attached chart.) By December of 1993, the zaire had risen to 110 million to the U.S. dollar, following a failed effort by the Mobutu regime to simply introduce a 5 million zaire note.<sup>126</sup>
- In 1995, inflation was at 381%; in 1996, it was at 741%, and rising swiftly.<sup>127</sup>
- In 1960, the GDP of Belgian Congo was roughly that of Canada. In 1967, GDP in Mobutu's DRC was roughly that of South Korea. GDP continued to fall through the 1970s and the 1980s, as the economy contracted while the population continued to expand, most notably in the refugee camps along the Rwandan border. By 1997, after 26 years of Mobutu, GDP per capita stood at \$117,<sup>128</sup> and even that paltry figure fell, to \$110 per capita in 1998.<sup>129</sup>
- The government was completely unresponsive to the needs of the people:
  - The state did not control the borders: provincial chiefs ran fiefdoms in the far reaches of the huge country, keeping control with violent militias, which remained loyal to those chiefs until they grew strong enough to take power themselves.
  - The state did not have any control (and certainly no monopoly) over lethal force, with small arms spread among the male population, and militias forming and dissolving as quickly as Western observers could describe them. Mobutu lost control of the streets as soldiers controlled extortion and violence among the cities.
  - Disease began to take its toll among the people, with a cholera epidemic beginning in the Kivu refugee camps.

- The arrogation of wealth to Mobutu and his family and followers, even in retrospect, even for Africa, is startlingly brazen (Table 2). It is difficult to imagine a situation which might have aroused more feelings of relative deprivation than those of the peasant subsistence farmer as the regime cleaned out the country:

Table 2: Zaire's "Privatization" of Government Expenditures<sup>130</sup>

	<u>President</u>	<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Social Services</u>
1972	28%	29.3%	17.5%
1974	26%	32.1%	12.4%
1976	29%	30.9%	13.2%
1978	29%	41%	11%
1980	33%	42%	11%
1982	35%	32%	10%
1984	39%	30%	9%
1986	39%	29%	7%
1988	49%	18%	4%
1990	80%	11%	2%
1992	95%	4%	nil

In 1966, Che Guevara, the intense true believer and arbiter of all things revolutionary, had noted disapprovingly in his book that the young Kabila was lacking in "revolutionary seriousness."<sup>131</sup> Kabila had indeed been lazy, interested in power but without the Big Man gravitas to get him there, and in the peculiarly African way had left Che both "charmed and exasperated."<sup>132</sup> Kabila had in the late 1960s retired from the battlefield of politics and insurgency and had fled with his small army to an exile of alcohol, prostitutes, smuggling and extortion in Tanzania. He spent most of the next thirty years there, frustrated and scheming.

The post-genocide power vacuum, combined with underlying economic, political and social factors of state failure in eastern Zaire gave him the opportunity he needed to

become, at last, the Big Man, and take over his country. Underlying conditions for insurgency ripening, triggers for a Zaire insurgency cocked and ready, waiting only for a Big Man, Laurent-Desire Kabila<sup>133</sup> reappeared.

### **The March to the West**

*Be in readiness*

*For with a band of thirty thousand men he comes*

*And in the towns, as they do march along*

*Proclaims him king, and many fly to him*

Launching his insurgency from the Kivu/Great Lakes region in 1996, Kabila and his guerrilla forces, backed by Uganda and Rwanda, crossed the border into Zaire and headed west, gathering strength and fighters as they went.

Laurent Kabila seemed like a savior when he and his supporters fought their way across what was then the devastated nation called Zaire in 1996 and 1997. Adoring crowds saluted him everywhere he went - they believed the little-known Laurent Kabila would set them free from the poverty and corruption of the decades of dictatorship under former President Mobutu Sese Seko.<sup>134</sup>

“There is no way to pinpoint the opening of the campaign that eventually carried the insurgents to Kinshasa,”<sup>135</sup> but the maelstrom left behind by the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the instability it created, combined with Mobutu’s cancer which drove him out of the country in 1996 and 1997 to seek treatment in Europe, was the seam in which Kabila’s insurgent movement could finally take hold. Like a weed growing through a

crack in concrete, Kabila's movement needed the seam – literal and figurative - created between Rwanda and Zaire, to grow. To exploit that seam, a Big Man emerged.

Kabila's AFDL (Alliance des forces democratiques pour la liberation du Congo) was actually a conglomeration of four squabbling insurgent movements, which finally found in Kabila the leader to unite them. Kabila, now the wise and wily insurgent leader returning at the head of a maquis from noble exile across the border, seized control of the AFDL and proclaimed himself leader. His power came to him from two sources. First, he was supported by outside governments, including those of Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, and Angola, all of which wanted Mobutu gone, but none of which wanted to be the first to back the wrong horse in the race to succeed him. Those governments were leaning forward, waiting for someone to believe in. Second, agitated, dispossessed Congolese of the Mobutu diaspora, both within and without the borders of Zaire, were ready to fight to take their country back, but needed someone to follow.

Kabila was smart enough to “develop a patchwork ideology for the movement”<sup>136</sup> and thus gave the proper gravitas to his insurgency. In speeches “laced with 1960's-style Maoist thinking,” he proclaimed that the liberation of Congo was at hand, and his insurgency was “fighting for a vast movement to put an end to this useless state that no longer exists.”<sup>137</sup> Such rhetoric was for both internal and Western consumption, and such fiery speeches, harkening to the Maoist insurrections of the 1960s, were tailor-made for the Western media. *The New York Times* in November 1996 obligingly proclaimed him the “new power to be reckoned with in Central Africa.”<sup>138</sup>

In comparison to the vile Mobutu, now 32 years in power, Laurent Kabila at first appeared not as an *insurgent*, but as a *revolutionary*, the romantic freedom fighter in

mold of Che and Mandela. Indeed, onto Kabila could Western governments, desperate for someone – anyone – to believe in on that dark and mysterious continent, place their hopes of a statesman they could work with:

(T)he Clinton administration's gushing rhetoric and propensity to extol certain African leaders as a "new breed" appealed to liberal sensitivities and to a certain post-Cold War triumphalism that encouraged a...belief in the inevitability of democratization and liberalization. In this buoyant mood...Kabila was initially greeted with a cautiously positive response when he seized power<sup>139</sup>.

Kabila pushed all the right buttons to be the Big Man leader of an African insurgency. He united formerly warring tribes, bridging the gap between modern fighters with Soviet-financed heavy weapons and jungle tribes carrying spears. Under a banner of liberation, of nationalist unity, he pulled together disparate groups: Rwandan and Congolese Tutsis; Zairean army soldiers fed up with the incompetence of the Mobutu regime who deserted with their weapons; Banyamulenge from the Kivu border camps; Hunde and Nande tribesmen; and even the Mai Mai tribes who "fight naked and believe that they have magic making them impervious to bullets."<sup>140</sup> Kabila was also able to tap into the shadowy world of South African, Rhodesian and European mercenary groups, including Sandline and Executive Outcomes, thus giving him the competent military leadership his insurgents lacked.<sup>141</sup>

Though a Lunda himself, he wrapped himself in the cloak of Tutsi oppression as the head of a Tutsi force. He thus managed to be all things to all people: the intense, angry general, starched fatigues stretching across his ample belly, when speaking to his people, and the intelligent, Europeanized, French-speaking head of state in a suit and "two-toned alligator shoes"<sup>142</sup> when speaking to Westerners.

His insurgency was successful. Through the summer and fall of 1996 he built strength, and in the spring of 1997 systematically moved west out of the Great Lakes, taking Kisangani, Katanga and Kasai, the “towns of Zaire falling like dominoes, first in the eastern part of the country, then spreading west and south.”<sup>143</sup> His insurgency culminated with the fall of Kinshasa to Kabila’s forces on May 17, 1997. Mobutu was exiled permanently, and died of cancer in the fall of that year. The First Congo War had come to an end, with Kabila firmly in control.

### **The Insurgent Fails as Ruler: Act Two**

*Look where the sturdy rebel sits*

*Even in the chair of state: belike he means*

*To aspire unto the crown and reign as king*

The joy among Congolese at Kabila’s insurgency, and the support they gave to Kabila and his men as he moved to Kinshasa that spring, was not rewarded. Kabila, having forgotten his proclamation of Zaire as a “useless state,” was sworn in as head of that state, in a ceremony attended by the heads of state of his African neighbors. He also received the ultimate African blessing, from the greatest of the Big Man African leaders: Nelson Mandela immediately sent 1.5 million Rand (roughly \$350,000) to support Kabila’s police forces,<sup>144</sup> and praised Kabila as “an outstanding thinker, a dynamic leader, and a man committed to peace.”<sup>145</sup>

Thus anointed, Kabila’s first act was declaring himself President of the “Democratic Republic of the Congo.” His second was to suspend the country’s



constitution.<sup>146</sup> Like too many of his revolutionary brothers in arms in other countries, Kabila was the insurgent leader interested in *taking* power, and in *holding* power, but not in doing anything *with* that power. The insurgency was the vehicle, the state the prize. The people were ignored.

He renamed the Kinshasa regime the “Government of National Salvation,” which it certainly was not. Consolidating swiftly, Kabila in 1997 banned all political parties but his, pulling into a shell protected by his family and high-ranking associates. He ignored the increasingly urgent demands of the Western world, to which Congo owed \$14 billion in aid debt, and continued the rape of the treasury begun by Mobutu. The meager sources of revenue for the country - agriculture (coffee and palm oil) and mining (diamonds and copper) - continued to decline, all falling by more than 50% even from 1988 levels, while Mobutu’s tailwind of inflationary pressure continued to blow.<sup>147</sup>

Kabila thumbed his nose at the center-left governments in Britain and the United States, ignoring the initial support of the Blair<sup>148</sup> and Clinton administrations and refusing to meet with their emissaries, and thereby quickly lost their support. “One year after coming to power, the man who had been hailed as a promising candidate to join the select cohort of US-approved new African leaders had been relegated to the status of an obnoxious irrelevance or an unfortunate mistake.”<sup>149</sup>

The Democratic Republic of Congo promptly became a war zone, with Kabila’s Ugandan and Rwandan allies turning on him and backing a new insurgent movement, the Congolese Rally for Democracy. Rwanda was particularly angry, as they had “given crucial support to the (Kabila) insurgency that toppled Mobutu,” and had strengthened Kabila’s “low-level insurgency... the rebel alliance was born (with) the catalyst for the

rebellion in South Kivu.”<sup>150</sup> Rwanda’s Tutsi government claimed to have even sent officers to command Kabila’s insurgents as they drove across the country the year before, and now, spurned, did not hesitate to fuel the violence flaring anew in Kivu.

Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola supported Kabila in his fight to keep control of the country, and to maintain both sovereignty and control on lethal force within its borders. Thus ignited the Second Congo War, which lasted from 1998 to 2003, would tally nearly three million deaths, and would be known as the greatest of all African crises.<sup>151</sup> As the Chicago Tribune observed in 2001:

When Laurent Kabila fought a rebellion to overthrow Mobutu Sese Seko in 1997, he enjoyed enormous legitimacy. The people of the nation then called Zaire felt nothing could be worse than the tyrant he had ousted. They were wrong. Congo has become a symbol for all that plagues Africa at the dawn of a new century. It emerged from European colonialism into a maelstrom of war, tyranny, corruption and poverty.<sup>152</sup>

### **Insurgency VII: Kabila Fils**

*But let me see: is this our foeman’s face?*

*Ah, no, no, no, it is mine son.*

*O pity, God, this miserable age!*

*O boy, thy father gave thee life too soon!*

On January 17, 2001, Desire-Laurent Kabila was assassinated in his bedroom in Kinshasa, shot by his bodyguard, a murder which no one was ever able to pin on any group but which all assume was the work of the men around Kabila. The eldest of his ten children, Joseph Kabila Kabange, took power, put in place and protected by the same murderous cronies who had propped up his father (and, perhaps, killed him.) Kabila’s

funeral was attended by representatives from a Who's Who of insurgencies gone awry: Zimbabwe, Angola, Zambia, Sudan, Iran, Cuba, and Libya. And in the most startling of ironies, only one European power sent an emissary to the Congo state funeral: Belgium.

### **The Little Man Fails**

*Speak like a subject!*

*Suppose that I am now my father's mouth...where I stand, kneel.*

Appointed in 2001 at age 29, and then “democratically” elected by the people and enthroned in 2006, Kabila  *fils*  (the Congolese call him “Kabila II”) appeared at first to be less grotesque than was his father, making legitimate efforts to end the relentless civil war that continues to plague the country, opening the country to international partners, and allowing the United Nations to dispatch its largest and most expensive peacekeeping mission to date<sup>153</sup> into his country. In 2002, in one of his first public acts as President, he shrewdly negotiated a loan of 760 million rand from South Africa as a “bridge” to stave off IMF, while quietly squeezing Pretoria for an additional \$10 billion in investment cash<sup>154</sup>. The money appears to have disappeared, likely into what the IMF delicately calls “private outflows” to offshore bank accounts.

Joseph Kabila is lean, soft-faced, quiet and handsome, dressed in Western-style suits, where his father was massive, imposing, terrifying, with a gleaming shaved head and military fatigues. Kabila II is unable to provide the Congolese – and, therefore, the rest of central Africa – the fearsome leader, the stabilizing tribal chief the people claim to despise but subconsciously need and want. The younger Kabila fancies himself a

strongman leader, but is in fact a caretaker for the real strongmen: his father's brutal lieutenants, still in power, propping up the son to retain their own kleptocratic regime.

The issues which create a modern seam for Congo's insurgent movements are depressingly familiar. In 1962, David Halberstam observed that "in the vacuum created by the end of Belgian colonial rule, the (Congo's) tribal chiefs reasserted their power." Forty years on, in the modern vacuum of the incompetent Kabila regime, warlords – the modern tribal chiefs - continue to fight for the same power in the same villages. The government has lost control of its borders and its institutions, and even of its own military, in which "both officers and rank and file regularly loot, rape, or stroke deals with the militias they are ostensibly fighting."<sup>155</sup>

True to African form, in this vacuum of power have arisen numerous insurgencies, coup attempts, power struggles and splinter factions within, between and among the parties and groups which have risen and faded in the post-Mobutu era. Exiled Tutsi General Laurent Nkunda is working at the now well-worn Great Lakes seam, the Kivu region, in an attempt to be that next Big Man to take his insurgency into Kinshasa. The stars are aligning for Nkunda: an external seam gapes in Kivu, while an internal seam keeps tribes at war in the cities of Congo. The stage is set.

Congo itself continues to slide into complete collapse: the IMF estimates that Congo's debt to outside creditors is more than 150% of its GDP, while the World Bank, citing Congo's "high resource dependence and low capital accumulation," points out that the country is going in reverse, with net savings negative and falling.<sup>156</sup> *Foreign Policy* keeps Congo in the top 10 of its worldwide failed states listings, while the private outflows, of both Congolese cash and foreign hard currency, continue. Kabila remains

unable to quell restive tribes aligning to his east, and has instead presided incompetently over the deaths of over two million people since 2003.<sup>157</sup>

In the cruelest of ironies, Joseph Kabila has failed as an African leader...not because he is too ruthless, but because he is *not ruthless enough*. In the tailwind of his father, one of the most brutal dictators known to modern history, one of the great African lions of murder and terror and fear, young Kabila is simply viewed as a small placeholder, in position until the emergence of the next Big Man insurgent who can take the reins.

All the situation now needs for a full-blown insurgency is the Big Man to lead. The seam is there. Along with systemic factors are the precursors of insurgency driven by state failure: relative disparities, lack of venue to redress grievance, reversion to tribal allegiances, poverty-driven anger, lack of personal security, reaction to a government which cannot provide the most basic of goods, and search for someone to believe in:

Tensions at the levels of the individual, the family, the clan, the village and the district are a critical source of instability in Congo...in the territories of Nord-Kivu, ethnic groups, clans and families are fighting over competing claims, (and) throughout eastern Congo, historical grievances fuel battles between and within dozens of mini factions from different tribes. These tensions could have been managed peacefully, but the 1998-2003 war destroyed the existing institutional means to do so. Local troubles in eastern Congo jeopardize the entire country's stability (as) local leaders learn to couch their feuds in the rhetoric that dominates the national discourse – be it about ideology, ethnicity, religion or class. The government's failure to reestablish the rule of law has perpetuated a culture of impunity. Congo's (state) has collapsed; factions fight one another over the spoils.<sup>158</sup>

In the end, as always, it is the people who suffer. In the past twelve years it is estimated that upwards of four million Congolese<sup>159</sup> have died outright: starved, slaughtered, killed in battle, or caught innocently in same. More than 500,000 Congolese

are currently displaced, surviving in refugee camps (or not....the International Rescue Committee estimates that over 1000 civilians die in the Congo each day), farmers adrift from their land and therefore from any prospect of saving themselves from ruin. It is “the Congolese people who have (since) suffered most, reduced to even greater poverty.”<sup>160</sup>

As a failed state, perhaps over the threshold into full collapse, “Congo is now the stage for the largest humanitarian disaster in the world – far larger than the crisis in Sudan.”<sup>161</sup> In the end, the developed world, again asked to intervene in this most opaque of problems, must ask the most fundamental of questions:

Should the Democratic Republic of Congo remain a single state? And, given its current occupied, exploited and fragmented condition...can it?

International Crisis Group report on Congo, 2001<sup>162</sup>

## **The End of the Beginning**

*Thou might repossess the crown*

*And of our labors thou shalt reap the gain.*

What was that anti-colonial movement for? So an African leader could enslave his people, instead of a European one?

Tom Friedman, *New York Times*, May 7, 2008<sup>163</sup>

The background of racist, extractive European colonialism in Africa has yellowed and faded, replaced by a vivid modern history of the incompetent, destructive arrogation of power and treasure in the hands of the violent few. The modern African insurgent, exploiting a seam, creating a narrative of anger and uniting tribal societies behind him – the modern tribal chief, the Big Man leader of the people- can maneuver a significant insurgency inside a failed state, and take control. The Big Man leads the insurgency, and wants to kill, to win, to *rule*...but not to *govern*. The rare African Big Man bent on good, a Khama or Masire or Mogae, is pathetic counterweight to the legacy of failure of the too-common African Big Man – Lumumba, Bashir, Mobutu, Kabila, Tshombe, Deby, Aidid, Amin, Mugabe – who destroys a state, and a people.

In the end, the people suffer. Their yearning for a tribal chief to lead them is too often unrewarded by wily, fiery insurgents turned lazy, corrupt rulers. Writ onto the gravestone of desperate, innocent modern Africans, then, might be these words:

*O bloody times!*

*While lions roar and battle for their dens*

*Poor harmless lambs abide their enmity*

## Addenda

1. The author is indebted to Lieutenant Colonel David Pond, U.S. Air Force, for the title of this paper, which the author shamelessly stole, then paraphrased, from an offhand remark. Lieutenant Colonel Pond spent much of the past decade in Africa, as an African Union liaison officer from the Air Force, and has been involved in the politics of much of the sub-Saharan region.

A phrase is common among American Africa hands is “Never trust the fat man,” and refers to the fact that in a country where the population is starving, anyone who is fat is obviously part of the regime that is the problem. Lieutenant Colonel Pond himself got this quote from Army Special Forces Major Joe Hayden, an Africa hand who was killed in a plane crash outside Lagos, Nigeria. Thus Major Hayden’s quote was not only accurate, but tragically prophetic.

“Big Man,” in the Hausa language, which is considered the lingua franca of the entire continent, is “oga.” Oga is a common term among Africans- showing respect at times, fear at others. The oga can be a chief or a family patriarch – the big man, benevolent and wise – or a tyrant Big Man of the Idi Amin stripe.

This heuristic is useful for the Big Man leader as well: such a huge, powerful, wealthy man is even “greater” and “bigger,” larger than life in comparison to “his” people who are sliding down the scale to famine, disease, and diaspora. Some of these are physically huge, fat men – Kabila and Idi Amin are examples – while some Westerners are surprised when they meet vicious, violent tyrants and find that they are small, almost frail. Mugabe and Aïdoud are examples of such men.

2. The colored charts and graphs presented in this paper are those of the author, using ideas and themes of works as discussed in the text and notes. Tables 1 and 2 were drawn from other sources and are noted appropriately.

3. The epigraphs at the start of major sections of this paper, and at the start of subsections in the analysis of the Congo, are taken from Shakespeare’s *Henry VI, Part III*. This play, written in the period 1591-1592, is mostly a reprint of *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of York*, and picks up (of course) where *Henry VI, Part II* left off. Henry returns to his homeland to reclaim the throne Richard Plantagenet has taken from him, and the play, as are most Shakespearean dramas, is a continuing series of battles and struggles for power, clans on the outskirts of the city building power to mount a campaign against the throne. Interspersed are bold statements about states, clans and heirs to power. The obvious parallels are to African warlords, African tribal chiefs, Big Men insurgents, rebel leaders, cross-border alliances and wars, and the like. In both accountings – the real, and the fictional - men are fighting over a kingdom in turmoil and trying to exploit seams in a state.



## APPENDIX A

## Failed States Index: Indicators of State Failure

Data is taken from The Failed States Index 2006,” *Foreign Policy* (May-June 2006), pp. 50-58.

Methodology used for 2005-2007 state rankings, and methodology behind CAST (Conflict Assessment System Tool) at [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org).

The indicators are

### Social

- Demographic pressure
- Movement of refugees or IDPs, yielding an emergency
- Legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or paranoia
- Chronic and sustained human flight

### Economic

- Uneven economic development along group lines
- Sharp and/or severe economic decline

### Political

- Criminalization and/or delegitimization of the State
- Deterioration of Public Services
- Suspension, or arbitrary application, of rule of law
- Security apparatus operating independently as “state within a state”
- Rise of factionalized elites
- Intervention of external political actors/other states

## APPENDIX B

## World Bank CPIA Criteria

Criteria drawn from World bank website at <http://web.worldbankorg>.

For amplification, see also the International Development Association (IDA) Resource Allocation Index (IRAI) at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA>.

### Economic Management

- Macroeconomic Management
- Fiscal Policy
- Policy

### Structural Policies

- Trade
- Financial Sector
- Business Regulatory Environment

### Policies for Social Inclusion/Equity

- Gender Equality
- Equity of Public Resource Use
- Building Human Resources
- Social Protection and Labor
- Policies and Institutions for Environmental Sustainability

### Public Sector Management and Institutions

- Property Rights and Rule-based Governance
- Quality of Budgetary and Financial Management
- Efficiency of Revenue Mobilization
- Quality of Public Administration
- Transparency, Accountability, and Corruption in the Public Sector

All the inland parts of Africa seem in all ages of the world to have been in the same barbarous and uncivilized state in which we find them at present. There are in Africa none of those great inlets to carry maritime commerce into the interior parts of that great continent: and the great rivers of Africa are at too great a distance from one another. The commerce any nation can carry on by means of a river which runs into another territory can never be very considerable...because it is always in the power of the nations who possess that other territory to obstruct the communication between the upper country and the sea.

Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776

1. A landlocked country, with poor access to land or sea transportation of goods, requiring crossing a border.

Such a landlocked state is not unique to the African subcontinent, but it is unfortunate that the central sub-Saharan countries fare poorly, even compared to their coastal neighbors. Development economist Jeffrey Sachs insists in “The Geography of Poverty and Wealth,” (Cambridge: Harvard University Center for International Development, September 16, 2000, [www.cid.harvard.edu](http://www.cid.harvard.edu)) that giving up dependence on “climate-dependent commodity exports” - food grains (wheat, maize and rice) and other raw agricultural products – in favor of light industry was the beginning of Asian and Southeast Asian countries’ rise out of the grinding poverty which still infects Africa.

He and fellow researchers “found strong evidence that geography plays an important role...the very poorest regions in the world are those saddled with both handicaps: distance from sea trade and a tropical or desert ecology,” and continues to say that “the per-kilometer costs of overland trade within Africa are often an order of magnitude greater than the costs of sea trade to an African port.”

It is also noteworthy that in a state like Sudan, which is actually two states within one border, such a limitation also applies. Though getting oil to market from Sudan doesn't require crossing a physical border, it does require breaching the Arab-African abyss between the two groups.

## 2. Sudden discovery of natural, usually mineral, resources.

This is the "resource curse." The resource curse often results in sudden windfall cash profit among a very small ruling elite. In Africa, this curse usually takes the form of either oil or diamonds, and secondarily other mineral resource such as copper, nickel, and cadmium.

The problem with oil is that it requires sophisticated refining to make it usable; such refining is beyond the reach of failed states, and thus the First World takes an overbearing interest in extracting this greasy coin of the realm. The problem with diamonds is that they are small, expensive, easily-hidden and smuggled and can be exchanged hand-to-hand (figuratively, if not literally) for hard currency. Hard currency is just what the rapacious Big Man wants: no oversight, no international organizations auditing him, no questions asked by offshore bankers.

## 3. Prosperity: GNP per capita

GNP per capita is the total value of a country's economic output divided by its population. Sachs states baldly: "the single best indicator of prosperity is GNP per capita."

4. Rate of inflation above 10%.

An inflation rate of 50% or more is hyperinflation, and can become uncontrollable. See The World Banks' *Africa Development Indicators 2007* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, October 2007) for background. This is another factor over which academics argue. As an example, the 100,000% rate of Mugabe's 2008 pre-election Zimbabwe is so high as to be meaningless.

It is ominous that all of the trends for Mugabe's 2008 Zimbabwe mirror those of pre-Kabila Congo. Zimbabwe appears on the verge of collapse.

5. *Volatility* of growth, as opposed to upward/downward *trending* of growth

Positive growth is, of course, better than negative numbers, but of more interest is the instability a volatile economic situation can create. A key issue in underlying conditions of insurgency in a failed state is whether one of the background factors for unrest is *chronic* poverty or *acute* poverty. For example, a country may suddenly trend markedly upward over a year or two, but sudden growth can sometimes actually be *more* destabilizing than steady decline.

This is a problem in suddenly-wealthy African countries which strike oil or diamonds...such sudden wealth is usually confiscated by a ruling elite, which, no matter the rhetoric of common-man solidarity which put the ruler in power, tends to arrogate to itself the riches they view as theirs by ruling - or, in the case of someone like Idi Amin, divine - right. The rare leaders, such as Botswana's Khama/Masire/Mogae, who distribute such sudden wealth to the people in the form of infrastructure and stable

government is notable; those who steal such new wealth are all too common. It can be argued that the more-successful countries in the developing world got that way by careful nurturing of basic resources, not discovery of exciting new ones.

1. Current object of interest by a larger First World power

Wealthy countries' interest in poor countries comes from typical economic desires (oil, diamonds, coffee, fruit, rubber, palm oil) but also geostrategic (Somalia's ports); geopolitical (Rwanda's position along the seam between former French and British colonies; Sudan's position between Arab and African culture); and simply emotional (Belgian romantic ideas about Belgian Congo.) Such First World powers are the obvious ones, the United States, Britain, and so on, but also include rising powers like China, heavily dependent on energy sources wherever they can find them.

2. Post-colonial standing as coherent state entity

Robert Rotberg, a bit awkwardly, but accurately, calls this a "preexisting traditional political culture of stateness." States which leapt into independence fell apart the most rapidly. These states are too often African. States such as India, which had similar ethnic divisions, paternalistic colonial powers and Big Man leaders of their own, demanded independence on their own schedules. India was led by native-staffed, British-trained Raj governments, and only took control when it was prepared to do so. Such are success stories, which by contrast make the violent, grasping, angry African dismissal of Western powers, while emotionally understandable, so ill-advised.

3. Looking to nonstate actor – usually Western - to solve problems once addressed by competent native government

Rotberg references Nelson Kasfir, author of a chapter in this book, who in turn echoes arguments of both Christopher Clapham and Jeffrey Herbst. All four men concur on the obvious: that state failure stems from loss of sovereignty by the standing government.

They disagree, though, as to what causes that slide into irrelevance. Clapham and Herbst view it as starting from the top: a fundamental and almost uniquely African ruling incompetence as former client states of paternalistic larger powers. Kasfir and Rotberg think failure starts from the bottom, with mistrust and hostility among citizens grouped by clan, tribe, or ethnicity, and eats away at the foundation of the state itself, collapsing it from below. The difference would be between a wrecking ball and termites, but with the same result of a collapsed structure. See Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 28.

#### 4. Chronic internal conflict

Internal conflict can inflict lasting, systemic damage to a state and thus linger beyond its kinetic phase. The World Bank notes that “within five years, half of all countries emerging from civil unrest fall back into the cycle of collapse.” See “The Failed States Index 2005,” *Foreign Policy* (July-August 2005).



1. Subgrouping and cleaving of populace by religion, race, tribe, clan, and subclan.

In 1999's *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Jared Diamond presents a unique argument for the fundamentally tribal nature of Africa. He points out that Africa is oriented on a north-south axis (as opposed to Eurasia, which orients east-west,) and this fact, combined with the harshness of the Sahara and Sahel regions, mean that plants and animals suitable for one area's climate and topography cannot move, or be moved, easily to another. Populations centered on crops and herds therefore focused on, and protected, one another rather than allying with far-off governments or obeying borders drawn by white men. The Zulu conquerors figured this out, and united warring tribes in southern and eastern Africa into nations with a central government providing a political structure.

The observer can make another leap: this is why the northern African states, separated by the Saharan desert from their poor and mismanaged neighbors, turn their view north and see themselves as not African, but Arab. See *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1996) pp. 290, 399.

2. Children and Family: Deprivation and Despair

- Infant mortality high.

It is critical to note that as a country's economy decelerates, infant mortality rises in concert. However, the reverse is not always true: as a state's economic power reverses and begins to rise, infant mortality can remain high.

Infant mortality is often viewed as not only an arresting figure in its own right, but as a leading indicator of failure as a sort of overall human suffering datum, since inherent

in infant mortality are factors such as women's health, nutrition, access to medical care, movement of refugees, spread of disease, and so on.

Another simple fact inheres: infant mortality is measured on a scale of deaths per 1000 live births, and the unpleasant fact is that as poverty and disease rise, women have more children, assuming some, or many, will die at birth or in childhood. Academics disagree as to the infant mortality figure's significance: some see it as a critical, overarching, top-five statistic, while others argue that it lags too far behind an improving state's other numbers to provide a rigorous, quantifiable, contemporaneous flag. Some insist that a better indicator is how many children live to age five.

- Primary school enrollment low.

Expanding the infant mortality argument: as disease and malnutrition spread, women have more children, in hopes of keeping one or several alive. These women must then stay with those small children, removing the women from the workplace, furthering the family's destitution (and that of the village, which loses that woman's productivity,) lowering standard of living even further and forcing older children into the streets or the fields for income.

Andrew Mellinger notes that as this cycle grows more vicious, "education for surviving children becomes a luxury rather than an expectation." See Rachel Hauser, "Location, Location, Location," Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center DAAC, NASA Earth Science Enterprise Data and Services (<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov>), August 15, 2001, p. 4.

- Secondary school enrollment lower than primary, and

- Resulting low literacy rate

In April 2008 briefings to his senior officers, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James Conway, noted, “I think more ominously, that the Third World nations will have burgeoning populations of youth and a lot of them without employment-without a way to get along in life. That, to us, is a real catalyst for regional conflict.” See Commandant of the Marine Corps bullets and brief, version 4 April 2008, prepared by Lieutenant Colonel Bobbi Shea USMC, Headquarters Marine Corps briefing and question and answer presentation.

- Life expectancy low, and trending lower

The trend is more important than a raw number. Life expectancy is low around the world, and in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, but it is the trendline which can get the attention of both Western observers and the suffering people themselves. As with any of these data, it is the effect on one’s family, not necessarily the rest of the clan, or of the village, that gets the attention of the man who might be a foot soldier for an insurgency.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (New York: PublicAffairs, Perseus Books Group, 2005), p. 686.

<sup>3</sup> “The Failed States Index 2005,” *Foreign Policy* (July-August 2005), p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Clapham, “The Global-Local Politics of State Decay,” Chapter Three in Robert Rotberg, ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p.77.

<sup>5</sup> Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), Chapter One.

<sup>6</sup> Clapham, “The Global-Local Politics of State Decay,” 81. See also Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), Chapter One (introduction and summary) and Jack Goldstone and Jay Ulfelder, “How to Construct Stable Democracies,” *The Washington Quarterly* 28 no.1 (Winter 2004-05), pp. 9-20. Jeffrey Sachs, Christopher Clapham, Nelson Kasfir, and Barbara Geddes have variations on this theme, in particular with regards to underperforming states (Geddes) and Africa (Clapham and Kasfir,) with Sachs providing an overarching academic view of deteriorating economics as prelude to state failure.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Clarke and Robert Gosende, “Somalia: Can a Collapsed State Reconstitute Itself?” in Robert Rotberg, ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> “The Failed States Index 2007,” *Foreign Policy* (July-August 2007). Methodology used for 2007 state rankings at [www.foreignpolicy.com](http://www.foreignpolicy.com), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> “Failed States Index 2005,” p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> Bretton Woods Project, “Analysis Casts Doubt on Bank Scorecard: CPIA Numbers made Public for First Time,” Global Policy Forum, [www.globalpolicy.org](http://www.globalpolicy.org), September 11, 2006. The reliably critical CATO Institute, in a September 2003 paper, commented that “unfortunately, because the CPIA data is not available to outside researchers, it is impossible to fully assess the quality of the Bank’s findings. There are, however, reasons to be skeptical.” See Ian Vasquez on the CATO website at <http://www.cato.org/pubs/fpbriefts/fpb79.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Office of Management and Budget, International Budget Development spreadsheet, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2004/pma/internationaldevelop.xls>

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<sup>12</sup> William Reno, "Sierra Leone: Warfare in a Post-State Society," in Robert Rotberg, ed, *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Cambridge, MA: The World Peace Foundation, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that the use of "Big Man" throughout this paper is not meant to confer any sort of legitimacy or moral judgment on what these "great" men do. Quite to the contrary: these Big Man leaders are often murderous, thieving tyrants who mean only to win power in order to loot their countries. Big Man leadership, from the point of view of the population who supports such a leader and his insurgency, is that which can inspire, unite and lead disunited groups against a common enemy. Once that Big Man finds a seam – a gap, a vacuum of power, something he can exploit – he can foment insurgency. Osama bin Laden, as leader of a globalized insurgency, falls into this Big Man category, right alongside such more-commonly referenced insurgents as Fidel Castro. David Kilcullen uses the Big Man term; other insurgency scholars call this leader a "Great Man." In African countries (and in bin Laden's case, in Arab countries as well) such a Big Man takes the place of the traditional ruler: the tribal chief.

<sup>14</sup> Brian Reed, *Formalizing the Informal: A Network Analysis of an Insurgency* (College Park: University of Maryland, 2006), p. 50. Here he quotes Marine Corps academic Bill Lind.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp. 50, 52. Lind again is credited with the idea of "centers of disorder."

<sup>16</sup> Frank Hoffman, "Neo-Classical Counter-Insurgency?" *Parameters* (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, Summer 2007), p. 81.

<sup>17</sup> David Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, (London, UK: Routledge, August 2005), reprint in U.S. Naval War College coursework, 2007-2008 academic year.

<sup>18</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency*, 1980, in Daniel Byman, *Understanding Proto-Insurgencies* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007), p.4. Byman echoes Kilcullen in marking a crisp delineating line between terror and insurgency. Terror is a tactic (what a group *does*), while insurgency is a cause (what a group *is*). It is also of note that Kilcullen takes this one step further for the modern insurgency: the jihad, like terror, is what the insurgency *does*, but to Kilcullen global jihad and global insurgency, to now, are the same thing.

<sup>19</sup> Frank Hoffman, "Neo-Classical Counter-Insurgency?" p. 71.

<sup>20</sup> Heidi Holland, "Make Peace With Mugabe," *The New York Times*, April 1, 2008, p. A23.

<sup>21</sup> Bernard Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," *The Naval War College Review* (April 1965), pp. 46-56.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p.53. Recent reports of the weakness of FARC rebels in Colombia upon the death of their Big Man leader, Manuel Marulanda, point up this fact. Marulanda, the classic Maoist Latin insurgent, led a scruffy 40-man guerrilla movement in 1964 to what the May 28, 2008 *Wall Street Journal* now calls “a nationwide insurgency.” Key to the success of FARC was when they “started earning hundreds of millions of dollars by taxing coca growers,” leading the President of Colombia to actually cede control of a big chunk of jungle to the insurgents. Marulanda was what one Colombian Army officer terms the FARC’s “ideological North Star...talking about revolution, social issues, Mao Zedong.” Marulanda was the classic Big Man leader: exploiting a seam, fomenting unrest, using nationalist rhetoric to pull the common man into his cause, using the power to tax to rule the countryside, winning control of territory. See Jose Cordoba, *The Wall Street Journal*, “Rebels Flail in Colombia After Death of Leader,” May 28, 2008, pp. A1, A14.

<sup>23</sup> Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare* (Newport: Naval War College, September 2007), p. VII-20.

<sup>24</sup> John Waghelstein, “Ruminations of a Woolly Mammoth, or Training and Advising in Counterinsurgency and Elsewhere” (Newport: U.S. Naval War College), Publication 3024.

<sup>25</sup> Colonels Charles T. Bohannon (Australia) and David Galula (France), *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, Proceedings of conference (Washington, D.C.: RAND Corporation, April 1962), transcribed by Sibylle Crane, chaired by Stephen T. Hosmer, pp. 12-13.

<sup>26</sup> Hoffman, “Neo-Classical Counter-Insurgency?,” p.81.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.84.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.74.

<sup>29</sup> Kilcullen, “Countering Global Insurgency,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Clapham, “The Global-Local Politics of State Decay,” in Robert Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004) p. 90.

<sup>31</sup> David Carment, “Preventing State Failure,” in Robert Rotberg, ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 147.

<sup>32</sup> Meredith presents a startling statistic: “In twenty-nine (African) countries, over the course of 150 elections held between 1960 and 1989, opposition parties were never allowed to win a single seat.” See *Fate of Africa* (2005), pp. 385-386.

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- <sup>33</sup> This is the “culture of impunity” which failed states promote, about which more later.
- <sup>34</sup> Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare* (2007), p. VII-20
- <sup>35</sup> Moises Naim, “The Five Wars of Globalization,” *Foreign Policy* (January-February 2003), p. 30.
- <sup>36</sup> General Anthony C. Zinni USMC (Retired), *From the Battlefield to the Negotiation Table: Preventing Deadly Conflict*. Speaking address and interview with the author. Joan C. Kroc Distinguished Lecture Series (San Diego, CA: Joan C. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, University of San Diego, April 15, 2004), pp. 37, 59.
- <sup>37</sup> Alexandra Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat: Travels With an African Soldier* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), pp.143-144.
- <sup>38</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 25-26.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid, ideas from Chapters Two and Three.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid, pp. 177-183.
- <sup>41</sup> Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 3.
- <sup>42</sup> Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (1970), Chapters One and Two.
- <sup>43</sup> Everett Dean Martin, *The Behavior of Crowds* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920), pp. 80-82, 186.
- <sup>44</sup> See graphic.
- <sup>45</sup> “Failed States Index 2007”, p. 4.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 4.
- <sup>47</sup> See Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), maps in the introduction and Chapter One.
- <sup>48</sup> Clapham, “The Global-Local Politics of State Decay,” in Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 90.
- <sup>49</sup> Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat* (2004), p. 40.
- <sup>50</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 94.

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<sup>51</sup> Jorge Arbache et al, *Is Africa's Economy at a Turning Point?* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper, Africa Region, Office of the Chief Economist, February 2008), p. 1. Nicolas Van de Walle, in "The Economic Correlates of State Failure," in Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), puts the number of sub-Saharan states at 48. The Sahara, and the Sahel region to the south, cuts east-west across the continent. With incessant state failure, strengthening, coalescing, renaming, uniting and splitting of entities due to coup, election, power-sharing or strong man rule, the continent is in an endless cycle of state churn. Nearly every state below the Sahel – the rare exception is a state like Ethiopia - used to be under another name, and another country's rule.

<sup>52</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 99.

<sup>53</sup> Clarke and Gosende, "Somalia: Can a Collapsed State Reconstitute Itself?" in Robert Rotberg, ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (2004), p. 132.

<sup>54</sup> Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Modern Library, 1979), p. 19.

<sup>55</sup> David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter* ((New York: Hyperion Books, 2007), p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> Hermann Hegdorn, ed, *Theodore Roosevelt Works*, (New York: Scribner's, 1926), pp.208-209, in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, (New York: Modern Library, 1979), pp.482-483. See also David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter*, pages 64-65. Theodore Roosevelt was from upper-crust New York society and was inculcated with noblesse oblige. He was second to no man in his belief in Manifest Destiny, but he also believed in the importance of bringing educated, benighted governance to the savages of the tribal world. For his time, though, he was nearly alone in believing that much of what the white man – European in Asia, India, and Africa; American in the West – did in such subjugation was brutal, racist and wrong. He had a special kinship with the American Plains Indians, in particular the Sioux, whom he met and admired as a landowner and cattleman in the Badlands and as an inveterate outdoorsman and explorer throughout the then-Wild West. He viewed with distaste the way other white men treated these noble tribes. He alone among his strata of American society believed these people should be allowed to stand on their own, and Roosevelt was (as in many areas) far ahead of his time in understanding how the races can work together.

<sup>57</sup> Alexandra Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat: Travels With an African Soldier* (2004,) Introductory page, Part One. Fuller is herself a white woman born in England, but was raised by British expatriate parents on a farm in the depths of Rhodesia, moved to Malawi and Zambia, and considers herself African. In her 2002 *Don't Let's Go To the Dogs Tonight*, and in this book, she brings the unique perspective of the white African who loves, but does not understand, her country and countrymen.

<sup>58</sup> Francie Latour, "Shackled to the Past," *The Boston Globe*, April 20, 2008, D1, D3.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.D3.

<sup>60</sup> “Failed States Index 2005”, p. 58.

<sup>61</sup> Though *Foreign Policy*, using its strict criteria, terms Congo a failed state, Severine Autesserre (quoted later), and multiple other scholars in multiple venues, term Congo as a collapsed state. The difficulty with such a distinction is that different observers use different criteria for what “failure” and “collapse” truly mean. Some toss such words off as the obvious description of what is happening, while others use a far-more rigorous, quantitative method for terming a state “failed” or “collapsed.” The Democratic Republic of Congo has no control over its borders, little to no control over its military, complete inability to provide the basic services for its people, and an utter absence of human security, with thousands of Congolese dying daily. Such a state is collapsed.

<sup>62</sup> Bernard Fall, “The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency”.

<sup>63</sup> Barbara Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics,” *Political Analysis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), pp. 131, 134, 149.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p. 149.

<sup>65</sup> David Apter, “Some Reflections on the Role of a Political Opposition in New Nations,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* IV (January 1962), p. 157. Referenced also in the conclusion of Rene Lemarchand, *Political Awakening in the Belgian Congo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p.347.

<sup>66</sup> Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat* (2004), pp. 36-37.

<sup>67</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p.386.

<sup>68</sup> *The Cambridge History of Africa 1940-1975* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 229.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, pp. 321-322.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 323.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> David K Leonard and Scott Straus, *Africa’s Stalled Development* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), p. 75.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p.75.



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<sup>74</sup> Bob Davis, “Measuring the Ingredients of Economic Growth,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 22, 2008, p. A10.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, p. A10.

<sup>76</sup> Of note on this comparison is South African Justice Malala’s *Wall Street Journal* op-ed, “Democracy for Africa,” April 8, 2008, p. A21.

<sup>77</sup> Ted Dagne, *Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and Status of the North-South Peace Agreement* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, March 27, 2007) p. 8.

<sup>78</sup> For further discussion of Sudan, see Gerard Prunier and Rachel Gisselquist in Chapter Four of Robert Rotberg, ed, *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, (2003). Prunier and Gisselquist refer to Sudan, somewhat flippantly, as a “successfully failed state,” and predicted in 2003 that Sudan “is not collapsed, nor likely on the verge of becoming so.” In this prediction, they were terribly wrong. It is notable that in July of 2004, both the U.S. Congress and the White House, both always hesitant to use the word “genocide,” described the situation in Darfur as just that. Also see Ted Dagne, *Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and Status of the North-South Peace Agreement* (2007).

<sup>79</sup> Prunier and Gisselquist, in Rotberg, *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (2003), pp. 101, 103.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, pp. 101-112.

<sup>81</sup> Editorial, Eugene, Oregon *Register-Guard*, January 22, 2001.

<sup>82</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>83</sup> “Failed States Index 2007”, accompanying article “Leading the Way to the Bottom,” p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Ted Dagne, *Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and Status of the North-South Peace Agreement* (2007).

<sup>85</sup> This state’s names are as follows: “Congo Free State” or “Independent State of the Congo” from the late 1800s until 1908; “Belgian Congo” from 1908 until 1960; “Republic of the Congo” from 1960 to 1964; “Democratic Republic of the Congo” 1964 to 1966; informally “Congo-Kinshasa” 1966-1971; “Zaire” 1971 to 1997; “Democratic Republic of the Congo” and informally “Congo-Kinshasa” 1997- present. See *The Cambridge History of Africa* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 698, footnote 2. Also see BBC Africa Country Profile Timelines website, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1072684.stm>. For the purposes of this paper, any

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reference to “Congo” or “The Congo” is meant to refer to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or Congo-Kinshasa.

<sup>86</sup> Rene Lemarchand, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo: From Failure to Potential Reconstruction,” in Rotberg, *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (2003), p. 29.

<sup>87</sup> Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, No. 3 (May/June 2008), p.94.

<sup>88</sup> Rene Lemarchand, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo: From Failure to Potential Reconstruction,” (2003).

<sup>89</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p.96.

<sup>90</sup> Michela Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living in the Congo on the Brink of Disaster* (New York, Harper Collins, 2001), p. 60.

<sup>91</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 95.

<sup>92</sup> David Halberstam, “Tribes Reassert Power in Congo,” *The New York Times*, August 5, 1962, p.1.

<sup>93</sup> *The Cambridge History of Africa*, p. 711.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, pp. 709-710.

<sup>95</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 102. See also Chapters 6, 7, and 17. See also Lemarchand in Rotberg’s *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (2003), for full recounting of this history.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, pp. 97, 101.

<sup>97</sup> Crawford Young, in his book *Politics in the Congo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965) p. 307, notes that “less than a fortnight after independence, the Congo’s army had mutinied against its entire officer corps.” This officer corps was not Congolese, but Belgian, and Lumumba had been so entranced with his own rhetoric and ideas that he had not realized that the army did not have trained officers ready to take over when the Belgians fled. Events then led to Young’s next conclusion: “the effort to transform overnight the colonial juggernaut into a functioning independent African state had failed.”

<sup>98</sup> See Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), and Lemarchand, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo: From Failure to Potential Reconstruction,” (2003).

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<sup>99</sup> Roger Anstey, in *Africa South of the Sahara 1975* (Rochester, Kent: Staples Printers Limited, 1975), pp. 957-958.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p. 960.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, pp. 959-961.

<sup>102</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p.149.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p.150. Guevara noted that Kabila “is too addicted to drink and women.”

<sup>104</sup> Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living in the Congo on the Brink of Disaster*, p. 76.

<sup>105</sup> *Africa South of the Sahara 1975*, p. 977.

<sup>106</sup> Mobutu’s own son-in-law (a Belgian) was appalled to discover that the Mobutu’s palace deep in the jungle at Gbadolite went through more than 10,000 bottles of champagne a year. See Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p.532. Michela Wrong noted that every time she attended a party with Mobutu, a servant would insist on dumping out and refilling her champagne glass after every sip, with the idea that the drink was otherwise too warm to enjoy. The dissonance between this lifestyle and that of the poverty on Congo’s streets is obvious.

<sup>107</sup> *Africa South of the Sahara 1975*, pp. 967, 973. See “Finance” subsection page 967, and “Finance,” “National Accounts,” and “External Trade” charts on 971-973.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 963.

<sup>109</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p.526. Even more sober scholars take up this theme: writing in volume 26 of the *Africa Contemporary Record*, Edouard Bustin’s 1998 essay was titled “Scrambling for the Carcass.” The U.S. ambassador of that time, Daniel Simpson, said that Mobutu “had not only killed the goose that laid the golden eggs, he’d eaten the carcass...”

<sup>110</sup> Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living in the Congo on the Brink of Disaster*, (2001), p. 129.

<sup>111</sup> Young, *Politics in the Congo* (1965) , pp. 213-214.

<sup>112</sup> Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat* (2004), p. 128.

<sup>113</sup> Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire, Canadian Army (retired,) *Shake Hands With the Devil* ( New York: Carroll and Graf, 2003), p. 47. General Dallaire, as the 1993-1994 commander of the United Nations Observer Mission in Uganda and Rwanda, is the most

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prominent Westerner to have tried to unravel the skein of genocide, starvation, rape, torture, coup, countercoup and ethnic hatred of the Great Lakes region around Kivu.

<sup>114</sup> Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil* (2003), p. 47.

<sup>115</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 497.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, p 499.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, p. 492.

<sup>118</sup> Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil* (2003), pp. 47, 299.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, pp. 63, 67.

<sup>120</sup> Alexandra Fuller, *Scribbling the Cat: Travels With an African Soldier* (2004), p. 165.

<sup>121</sup> Meredith, *Fate of Africa*, p.497.

<sup>122</sup> Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil* (2003), p. 375.

<sup>123</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, pp. B302-303.

<sup>124</sup> Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living in the Congo on the Brink of Disaster* (2001), p. 240.

<sup>125</sup> Eduoard Bustin, "Stalemate Turns to Rot," *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 25, 1994-1996* (New York and London: Africana Publishing Company, 2001), pp. B277-278.

<sup>126</sup> Figures from [www.country-data.com](http://www.country-data.com), Country Studies Series, Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress.

<sup>127</sup> Eduoard Bustin, "Zaire/Democratic Republic of the Congo; Scrambling for the Carcass: From Mobutu's Zaire to Kabila's Congo," *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B315.

<sup>128</sup> Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), p 526.

<sup>129</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B318.

<sup>130</sup> William Reno, "Sovereignty and Personal Rule in Zaire", *African Studies Quarterly*, (Gainesville: Center for African Studies, University of Florida, 1997), p.5. Take note that totals in the earlier years do not add up to 100%; this is because of debate within the World Bank as to how money was spent, as well as loss of government revenue from

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smuggling. Reno points out that in the early 1990s, the diamond trade alone was throwing off nearly \$500,000,000 per year, money much of which, he notes, Mobutu undoubtedly stole.

<sup>131</sup> Meredith, *Fate of Africa* (2005), p. 150.

<sup>132</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B302.

<sup>133</sup> In a fated irony, the common noun “kabila” in Swahili means “tribe” or “ethnic group.”

<sup>134</sup> BBC Africa Country Profile Timelines website, January 17, 2001, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1072684.stm>.

<sup>135</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B303.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. B303.

<sup>137</sup> James McKinley, “Old Revolutionary Is a New Power to Be Reckoned With in Central Africa,” *The New York Times*, November 27, 1996, p. 2.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B320.

<sup>140</sup> McKinley, “Old Revolutionary Is a New Power to Be Reckoned With in Central Africa,” p. 2.

<sup>141</sup> These groups have a reputation for savagery and lack of oversight, as befits their mercenary reputations. Executive Outcomes, which was involved in several African insurgencies and coups, was the first of the turnkey armies-for-hire, with their own weaponry, vehicles, and aircraft. Their shooters were white men, fighters who fled the South African and Rhodesian armies at the end of apartheid. EO went out of business, but British ex-SAS officer Tim Spicer started Sandline to pick up where EO had left off, and Sandline has since evolved into Aegis Security Services, which is heavily involved in the war in Iraq and is equally involved in intrigue and legal issues in the grey area of contractors on the battlefield. The insurgencies in Africa acted as a sort of testbed for the groups of civilian shooters – guards, escorts, and even snipers - now engaged in wars in the Middle East.

<sup>142</sup> McKinley, “Old Revolutionary Is a New Power to Be Reckoned With in Central Africa,” p. 2.

<sup>143</sup> James McKinley, “Rwanda’s War Role May Haunt Congolese,” *The New York Times*, July 12, 1997, p.5.

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<sup>144</sup> Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1998: South Africa*, at [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org).

<sup>145</sup> Editorial, *Los Angeles Times*, January 18, 2001.

<sup>146</sup> “News Summary,” *The New York Times*, May 18, 1997.

<sup>147</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B318.

<sup>148</sup> In an interesting juxtaposition, Tony Blair had taken power in the United Kingdom exactly two weeks before Kabila did so in Kinshasa. Both men, working within the systems of their milieu and with the weapons (or, in Blair’s case, “weapons”) they had at hand, overthrew what had been seemingly entrenched regimes.

<sup>149</sup> Bustin, *Africa Contemporary Record, Volume 26, 1996-1998*, p. B321.

<sup>150</sup> James McKinley, “Rwanda’s War Role May Haunt Congolese,” *The New York Times*, July 12, 1997, p.5.

<sup>151</sup> BBC News, *African Country Profile: The Democratic Republic of Congo*, April 2008. Some have termed this the Second Congo War, while others in the West, in horror at the scope of the killings, call it the African World War. In a *Foreign Affairs* article (“The Trouble with Congo,” May-June 2008), Severine Autesserre calls the Kabila 1996-2006 period “the world’s deadliest conflict since World War II.”

<sup>152</sup> Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, January 18, 2001.

<sup>153</sup> Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, No. 3 (May/June 2008) at [www.foreignaffairs.org](http://www.foreignaffairs.org), p.94.

<sup>154</sup> Patrick Bond, *Looting Africa* (London: Zed Books LTD, 2006), p.129.

<sup>155</sup> Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” p. 105. Autesserre views with alarm the increasing power and violence of local warlords, and makes the point the if all politics is local, so is all regional and national turmoil driven by local issues and local grievances voiced by local leaders. In this article, she is more prescriptive in her conclusions, insisting that the greater world involve itself in the local issues in Congo before they become national ones and spill over the borders to destabilize central Africa. She views the loss of rule of law and redress of grievance, due to the complete lack of any governing authority beyond the barrel of a gun, as the vacuum in which warlords can maneuver, and thus as the first issue the international community should address. Her mantra is that Congo must be rebuilt from the ground up.

<sup>156</sup> Patrick Bond, *Looting Africa* (2006), p. 159.

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<sup>157</sup> Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” p. 94.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, pp. 95, 100, 101, .

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, p.94.

<sup>160</sup> See BBC Africa Country Profile Timelines website, January 17, 2001, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1072684.stm>.

<sup>161</sup> Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” p. 95.

<sup>162</sup> Norimitsu Onishi and Ian Fisher. “New President Inherits a Paralyzed Congo.” *The New York Times*, February 1, 2001.

<sup>163</sup> Thomas Friedman, “The Democratic Recession,” *The New York Times*, May 7, 2008, p. A27.